Om

Sa vidya ya vimuktaye



Dr. R. D. RANADE'S

DHYĀNA GĪTĀ

ANDE



BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN, BOMB

What Bharatiya Vidya Stands for

Bharatiya Shiksha must ensure that no promising young Indian of oharacter having faith in Bharat and her culture Bharatiya Vidya should be left without modern odueational equipment by reason merely of want of funds.

2, Bharatiya Shiksha must be formative more than informative, and cannot have for its end mere acquisition of knowledge. Its legitimate sphere is not only to develop natural talents but so to shape them as to enable them to absorb and express the permanent values of Bharatiya Vidya.

3. Bharatiya Shiksha must take into account not only the full growth of a student's personality but the totality of his relations and lead him to the highest self-fulfilment of which he is capable.

4. Bharatiya Shiksha must involve at some stage or other an intensive study of Sanskrit or Sanskritic languages and their literature, without excluding, if so desired, the study of other languages and literature, ancient and modern.

5. The re-integration of Bharatiya Vidya, which is the primary object of Bharatiya Shiksha, can only be attained through a study of forces, movements, motives, ideas, forms and art of creative life-energy through which it has expressed itself in different ages as a single continuous process.

6. Bharatiya Shiksha must stimulate the student's power of expression, both written and oral, at every stage in accordance with the highest ideals attained by the great literary masters in the intellectual and moral spheres.

7. The technique of Bharatiya Shiksha must involve—

(a) the adoption by the teacher of the *Guru* attitude which consists in taking a personal interest in the student; inspiring and encouraging him to achieve distinction in his studies; entering into his life with a view to form ideals and remove psychological obstacles; and creating in him a spirit of consecration; and

(b) the adoption by the student of the *Sahitya* attitude by the development of—

(i) respect for the teacher,

(ii) a spirit of inquiry,

(iii) a spirit of service towards the teacher, the institution, Bharat and Bharatiya Vidya.

8. The ultimate aim of Bharatiya Shiksha is to teach the younger generation to appreciate and live up to the permanent values of Bharatiya Vidya which is flowing from the supreme art of creative life-energy as represented by Shri Ramachandra, Shri Krishna, Vyasa, Buddha and Mahavira have expressed themselves in modern times in the life of Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, and Swami Vivekananda, Shri Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi.

9. Bharatiya Shiksha while equipping the student with every kind of scientific and technical training must teach the student, not to sacrifice an ancient form or attitude to an unreasoning passion for change; not to retain a form or attitude which in the light of modern times can be replaced by another form of attitude which is a truer and more effective expression of the spirit of Bharatiya Vidya; and to capture the spirit afresh for each generation to present it to the world.



आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side

—*Rigveda*, I-89-i

BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

General Editors

R. R. DIWAKAR

S. RAMAKRISHNAN

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Dr. R. D. RANADE'S

DHYĀNA GITA

Elucidated & Translated

By

M. S. DESHPANDE

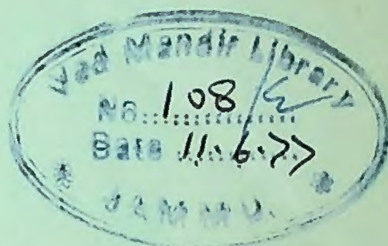
BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

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BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

Dr. R. D. RANADE'S

DHYĀNA GITA



Elucidated & Translated

BY

M. S. DESHPANDE



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Om

Dedicated

To

My Dear Departed Son

Dr. SRINIWAS, M.Sc. Ph.D. D.Phil. (Oxon)

Reader in Chemistry, Banares Hindu University



Birth 14-1-1924

Death 30-12-1971

"A Fine Product"

of

The Grace of Sri Gurudev!



KULAPATI'S PREFACE

THE Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan—that Institute of Indian Culture in Bombay—needed a Book University, a series of books which, if read, would serve the purpose of providing higher education. Particular emphasis, however, was to be put on such literature as revealed the deeper impulsions of India. As a first step, it was decided to bring out in English 100 books, 50 of which were to be taken in hand almost at once. Each book was to contain from 200 to 250 pages.

It is our intention to publish the books we select, not only in English, but also in the following Indian languages: Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

This scheme, involving the publication of 900 volumes, requires ample funds and an all-India organisation. The Bhavan is exerting its utmost to supply them.

The objectives for which the Bhavan stands are the reintegration of the Indian culture in the light of modern knowledge and to suit our present-day needs and the resuscitation of its fundamental values in their pristine vigour.

Let me make our goal more explicit:

We seek the dignity of man, which necessarily implies the creation of social conditions which would allow him freedom to evolve along the lines of his

own temperament and capacities; we seek the harmony of individual efforts and social relations, not in any makeshift way, but within the frame-work of the Moral Order; we seek the creative art of life, by the alchemy of which human limitations are progressively transmuted, so that man may become the instrument of God, and is able to see Him in all and all in Him.

The world, we feel, is too much with us. Nothing would uplift or inspire us so much as the beauty and aspiration which such books can teach.

In this series, therefore, the literature of India, ancient and modern, will be published in a form easily accessible to all. Books in other literatures of the world, if they illustrate the principles we stand for, will also be included.

This common pool of literature, it is hoped, will enable the reader, eastern or western, to understand and appreciate currents of world thought, as also the movements of the mind in India, which, though they flow through different linguistic channels, have a common urge and aspiration.

Fittingly, the Book University's first venture is the *Mahabharata,* summarised by one of the greatest living Indians, C. Rajagopalachari; the second work is on a section of it, the *Gita,* by H. V. Divatia, an eminent jurist and a student of philosophy. Centuries ago, it was proclaimed of the *Mahabharata:* "What is not in it, is nowhere." After twenty-five centuries, we can use the same words about it. He who knows

it not, knows not the heights and depths of the soul; he misses the trials and tragedy and the beauty and grandeur of life.

The *Mahabharata* is not a mere epic; it is a romance, telling the tale of heroic men and women and of some who were divine; it is a whole literature in itself, containing a code of life, a philosophy of social and ethical relations, and speculative thought on human problems that is hard to rival; but, above all, it has for its core the *Gita,* which is, as the world is beginning to find out, the noblest of scriptures and the grandest of sagas in which the climax is reached in the wondrous Apocalypse in the Eleventh Canto.

Through such books alone the harmonies underlying true culture, I am convinced, will one day reconcile the disorders of modern life.

I thank all those who have helped to make this new branch of the Bhavan's activity successful.

1, Queen Victoria Road,
New Delhi,
3rd October 1951.

K. M. MUNSHI



FOREWORD

Sri M. S. Deshpande has translated Dr. Ranade's "Dhyāna Gita" into English with elucidation. Dr. Ranade was one of the greatest thinkers of modern India and this work is as characteristic of his attitude as any other.

Sri Deshpande has translated the "Dhyāna Gita" in the spirit of a devotee. His elucidation throws considerable light on Ranade's thought. Those who are in earnest about meditation will find this a very useful text-book; to the students of the Gita it will be a new approach.

Sri Deshpande deserves congratulations on his having succeeded in preparing this work.

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan,
Chowpatty Road, Bombay-7.

K. M. MUNSHI



INTRODUCTION

My friend and spiritual brother, Sri Manoharpant S. Deshpande, M.A., has several important Kannada and a few English and Marathi books also to his credit and now he has brought out this valuable volume, giving an elucidation and translation of Gurudev Ranade's "Dhyāna Gita". Gurudev himself wanted to write an explanatory introduction to it but it was not to be. And Sri Deshpande is fully conscious that this book is necessarily the second best, on which the reader must depend now. Still, it will be very useful to aspirants, in giving a clue to the use of the "Dhyāna Gita" for the purpose of meditation. For, the elucidation is based mainly on Gurudeva's *The Bhagavadgita as a Philosophy of God-realisation,* supported wherever necessary by his philosophy as propounded in his other works. Thus the author has correctly pointed out the significance of the three-fold arrangement of the "Dhyāna Gita"—Metaphysics, Ethics and Mysticism—following man's four faculties—intellect, feeling, will and the fourth, spiritually most important faculty of intuition. Mystical realisation of God is the ideal and goal of an aspirant and for that he has to develop his intuition with the help of the other three faculties. Sri Deshpande explains clearly their interdependence and inter-relation for the reader's benefit.

The Dhyāna Gita is evidently meant for daily use for the purpose of developing all these faculties. But how actually to use it, how its reading and contemplation would help in this work, is now everybody's guess, in the absence of guidance from Gurudeva's introduction. Still, every aspirant ought to formulate his own ideas on this point for making full use of the Dhyāna Gita. So, I propose to give mine, very briefly, in this Introduction, for whatever they may be worth.

A short aphorism in Sanskrit describes the psychological cycle leading from knowledge, through feeling, to action: जानाति – इच्छति – यतते (knows, desires, acts). The arrangement of the Dhyāna Gita follows this principle. Working backwards, right action or right effort is the outcome of right feeling which in its turn is born of right knowledge. So the aspirant should acquire right knowledge which will create right feeling leading to right action or correct, effective Sādhana. The chapters on Metaphysics expound the nature of God, Brahman, Atman—the individual Self and the Universe or Māyā. Now, contemplation on the great qualities of God and Atman will naturally give rise to noble emotions of love, respect, awe, wonder, etc., which will draw the aspirant towards God. Emotions alone can bring about unison between the subject and the object and knowledge helps in deepening them. Again, when a devotee understands the true nature of his Self, that, in essence the Self is Brahman, and also learns that his present imperfections, physical and mental, are all an illusion and that he can attain his original Divine Glory by contemplation on God, he will begin to feel निर्वेद (disgust) for physical pleasures and his attachment to them and his devotion to God would be strengthened. The Truth that God alone

exists, all else, however great and glorious and pleasing it may appear to the human mind in its ignorance, is mere illusion, a dream, is bound to create renunciation and detachment from worldly values and thus intensify love for God. So far about the use of the metaphysical portion of the Dhyāna Gita.

The next point is the use of its Ethics. The theory of the three Guṇās, Activism or Karma-yoga and moral qualities are all included in Ethics. The three Guṇās are a symbolical representation of moral principles and Karma-yoga and Activism, as advocated by the Gita, is a means to attain renunciation and detachment. So, all these subjects refer to the attainment of moral qualities. Meditation on these should convince us that God-devotion is the highest virtue, as God-realisation is the highest ideal and devotion, the supreme means to attain it. All other virtues are facets or means to increase devotion, as Gurudev Ranade has said. Growing faith in the absolute necessity of devotion will lead to efforts to deepen it. Again, contemplation on virtues will strengthen them in an aspirant. For man is what he thinks. This Gurudev Ranade has explained at length while writing on "Moral Meditation" as he has set out the utility of "Ideological Meditation" or meditation on the qualities of God, in the chapter on "Methods of Meditation" in his book *The Bhagavadgita as a Philosophy of God-realisation.*

Finally, we come to devotion, without which no progress in spiritual life is possible in spite of philosophical knowledge and purification of mind. Meditation on the chapters of ध्यानयोग and भक्तियोग or the mystical portion of the Dhyāna Gita will throw light on the processes of ध्यानयोग. It will show how loving meditation on God leads

to God-realisation; man is unable to realise God as he is attached to his body and to all objects of senses for the satisfaction of physical desires. Thus his mind is full of thoughts of the senses. When he begins to feel love for God, his mind will think of or contemplate on God for some time in the day. Here Godward travel begins. The journey will be completed when the mind is filled with God only, all ideas—even the memory of "I and Mine" having been eliminated. This is perfect ध्यान and this cannot be achieved without intense devotion, indescribable and undescribed love for God or भाव as Gurudev described it. This love alone will enable an aspirant to forget everything else, sacrificing all that was once near and dear to him and to apply himself to loving, one-pointed meditation on God. This complete sacrifice is surrender or शरणागति. The intensity of the aspirant's devotion must reach the point of surrender, complete resignation to the will of God, in supreme faith in His Benevolence and Omnipotence. Such conviction and faith is very necessary for an aspirant.

Contemplation on the various chapters of the Dhyāna Gita will thus deepen the aspirant's faith in God, intensify his love and devotion to Him, create निर्वेद for worldly life, deepen his conviction and faith in the absolute necessity of surrender and thus enable him to apply himself to one-pointed meditation on God, to undistracted ध्यान. Hence this is ध्यानोपकारिणी गीता as rightly named by Gurudev.

An aspirant may read contemplatively one chapter of the Dhyāna Gita, preferably before sitting for meditation or नामस्मरण. Every Sādhak knows full well that

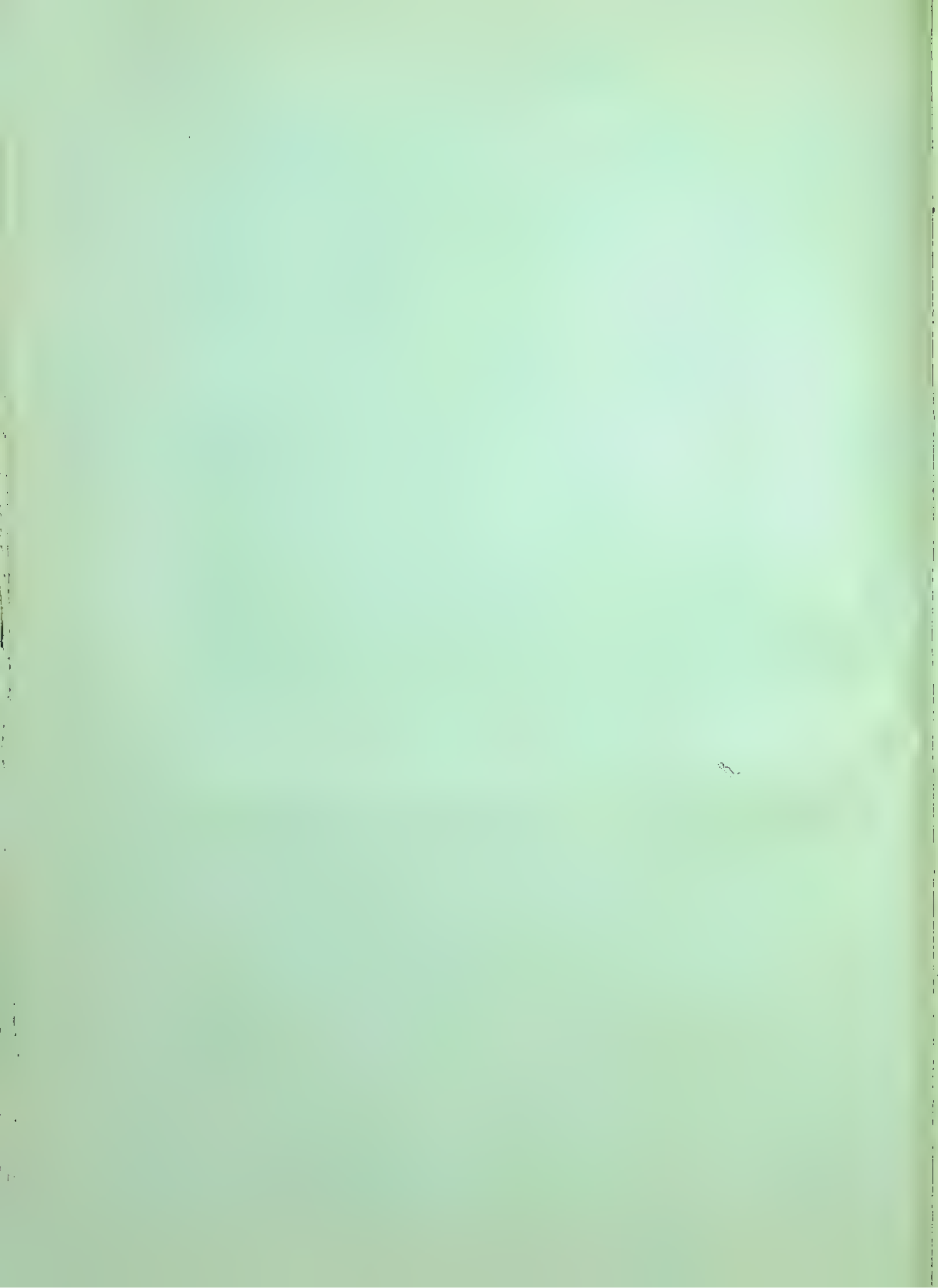
it is not possible to concentrate on Nāma for a long time. The mind wanders to mundane matters and has to be brought back to Nāma. If नामस्मरण is started after reading Dhyāna Gita contemplatively, the mind will turn to thoughts so contemplated, when it wanders from Nāma. This will serve a double purpose. Thoughts of Dhyāna Gita will sink deep into the aspirant's heart and in course of time will constitute his faith and attitude to life. Secondly, it will enable him to concentrate his mind on matters essentially spiritual, during meditation and from these it can be brought back to Nāma more easily. निर्विकल्पासि कल्पावे । कल्पना मोडे स्वभावे । says Ramadas.

All these ideas, I believe, are implicit in Gurudeva's book on the Bhagavadgita. But whether the above exposition is in keeping with his thoughts is always open to doubt, not only to the reader but even to the writer. So I set down these thoughts only to state how I use the Dhyāna Gita for the benefit of my meditation and make no further claims.

In his elucidation Sri Deshpande has briefly expounded all important teachings of the Bhagavadgita following the systematised arrangement of Gurudev Ranade. I hope even such students of the Bhagavadgita, as are not interested in the spiritual Sādhana, will find this book useful for understanding Gita philosophy. Sri Deshpande deserves the thanks of all lovers of Bhagavadgita for placing this small volume in their hands and the gratitude of all spiritual aspirants for immensely enhancing the utility of the Dhyāna Gita for them.

Shivajinagar,
Sangli.

G. V. TULPULE



PREFACE

Sri Gurudev Dr. Ranade once casually remarked: "Dhyāna-Gita is Vyās systematised; it is the essence of the Gita, just as the Gita is the essence of the Upaniṣads." "The Dhyāna-Gita* has been also entitled by him "ध्यानो पकारिणी गीता"— Gita specially designed as an aid to meditation. We have tried in this volume, to present this 'systematised essence of the Gita' in the English garb. We have also tried to elucidate the main principles underlying the Dhyāna-Gita, so that the aspirants might realise their value and be prompted to make proper use of the Dhyāna-Gita to heighten the depth and intensity of their meditation. This attempt, it is hoped, would serve as valuable aid to a wider circle of earnest aspirants.

A word about the actual use of this Dhyāna-Gita as an effective help to meditation, would not be out of place here. If Sri Gurudev had written an introduction and given concrete instructions regarding its use, we would have been greatly benefited. But unfortunately that was not to be. Hence we are deprived of his valuable guidance in this respect. However, he has sufficiently discussed this problem in all his works—especially in

* This was published by the Secretary, Ranade Ashram, Nimbal (R.S.) in 1961.

his book on the Gita—*The Bhagavadgita as a Philosophy of God-realisation.* He has also given very useful instructions to his disciples, from time to time, about the process of meditation. Hence, the following suggestions made for the use of this volume, in the light of the instructions left by Gurudev, would, we hope, prove to be very helpful to the aspirants.

Sri Gurudev always advocated what he used to call 'meditative reading.' "Think before you read, while you read and after you read thinking and reading should go hand in hand." That was his advice in this respect. Accordingly, we should read the Light Eternal contained in Part I of this volume—especially the portion dealing with the three types of meditation, viz., the ideological, the moral and the mystical. That will give us a comprehensive idea about the metaphysics, the ethics and the mysticism of the Gita which would clarify our notions about the Goal we are to reach and the Path we are to follow.

Thereafter, we should begin to read the Dhyāna-Gita forming Part II of this volume. We should go through one chapter at a time, prior to sitting for meditation. We should, of course, adopt the method of meditative reading. After finishing a chapter we should read the headings given by Sri Gurudev to different sections in that chapter. We should read them three or four times, chew and digest them, so that the ideas might sink in the brain and soak in the heart. This will stimulate proper emotion and crowd out all disturbing thoughts from the mind and enable us to maintain the even flow of meditation for a long time. In case we are disturbed again, the same process may be repeated with advantage. Such meditative reading would ultimately prove

to be very valuable in intensifying our meditation. It would remove the disturbance, restore the lost balance, deepen the intensity of our meditation and enable us to make a rapid advance towards the goal of God-realisation.

The psychological cycle of "Knowledge, Love, and Effort" referred to by Sri Kakaji in his Introduction, is a very important factor in life—both material and spiritual. It is and should be present, not only in Mysticism but also in Metaphysics and Ethics as well. In fact, it should be present in all our effective activities for varied attainments in our life. Metaphysics aims at clarity of the head; Ethics, at purity of heart; and Mysticism aspires after the awakening of intuition. For achieving all these objects, a student or an aspirant ought to go through the cycle properly, in the absence of which no attainment worth the name would be possible. He must first clearly know the object, realise fully its value, before he can learn to love it. And he must passionately love it before he can actively and whole-heartedly try to attain it. In each of the three spheres mentioned above, the effort assumes the form of meditation. Meditation on the idea of God ensures clarity of thought; that on the central virtue of devotion results in the purity of heart—emotions; and that on the symbol of Divinity brings about proper awakening and evolution of intuition. A clear intellect would strengthen faith and conviction; a pure heart would develop and intensify devotion; while an evolved intuition would grant the vision and bliss Divine. Finally, such clear knowledge, pure devotion and sure intuitive evolution, would form the ultimate cycle, culminating in passionate devotion, entire self-surrender, and soulful, all-absorbing meditation on God. Then

alone would the aspirant's efforts be crowned with complete success and he would have the rare privilege of enjoying the blissful vision of the Lord. The Dhyāna-Gita is designed and expected to serve this purpose. Hence every aspirant should use it in the way that suits him best.

Finally I must express my profound sense of gratitude to the Lord and to Sri Gurudev for granting me the necessary light to accomplish this difficult task. I began the work with very great diffidence but could end it with a good deal of confidence because of the guidance I received through their grace from time to time. I am also very much grateful to Rev. Matosri Smt. Sitabai alias Kakusaheb Ranade for blessing this attempt of mine. Before I close I must express my heart-felt thanks to Dr. K. M. Munshiji, President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, for his fine Foreword to this volume, marked by dignified brevity and beauty. I am also very much grateful to my spiritual elder brother, Sri Kakasaheb Tulpule, Retired D.P.M.G. Sangli, for blessing my humble attempt, with his illuminating Introduction, throwing fresh light on the utility of Dhyāna-Gita. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to the great saints and savants—Sri Aurobindo, Sri Vaswaniji, Dr. Radhakrishnan and Prof. D.S. Sharma for the inspiring extracts taken from their writings. Lastly, I must offer my sincere thanks to Sri S. Ramakrishnan for kindly publishing this book in the Book University Series, in such a fine manner.

Shanti-kunja
Vikrampur Extension,
Athani, Dist. Belgaum,

M. S. DESHPANDE

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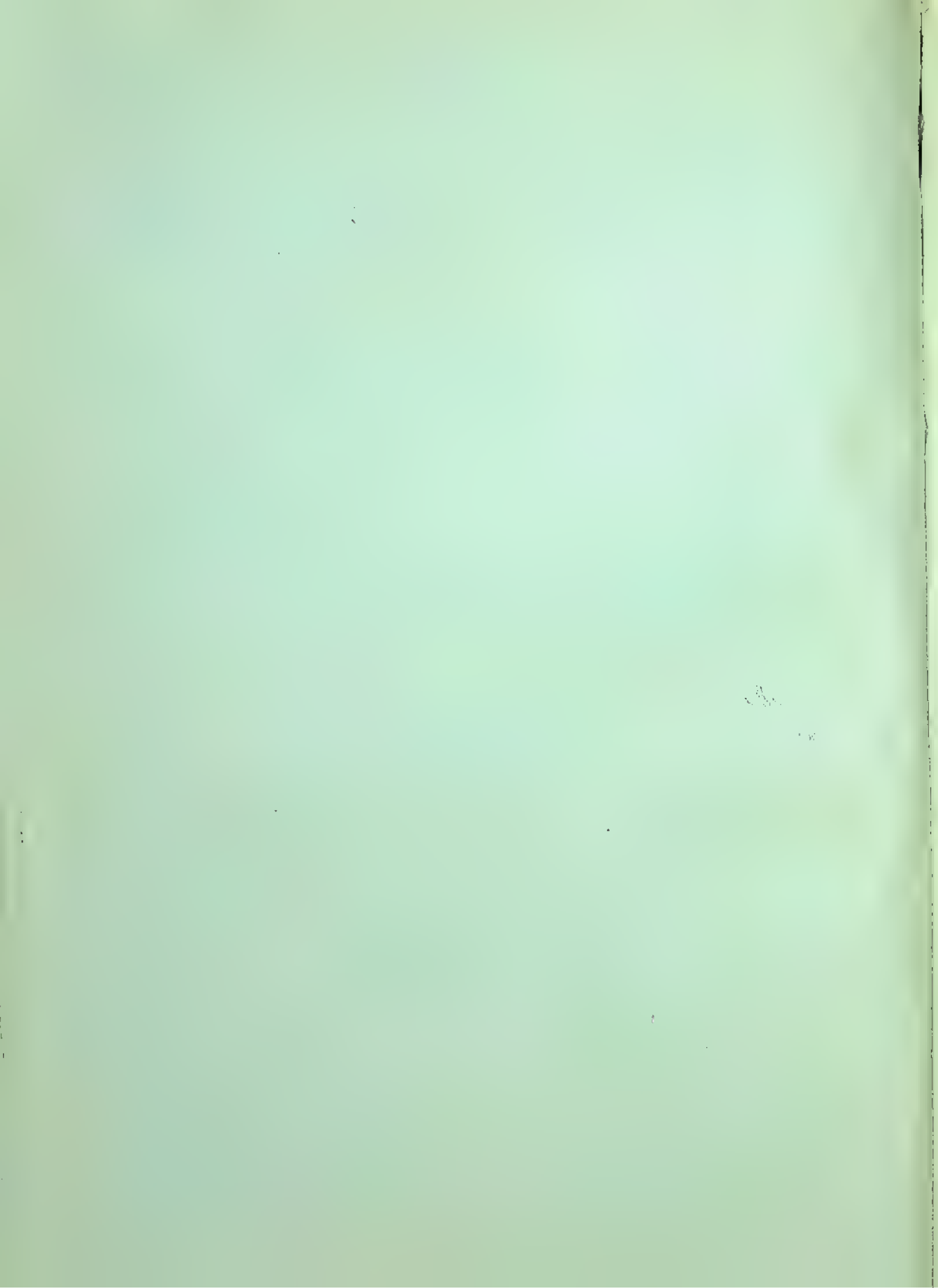
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PART I

FLASH I

PROLOGUE

(Glory of the Gita)

Divine Singer:

Let me at the outset pay my reverential homage to Sri Kṛṣṇa, the Divine Singer, the Master-poet of this mighty poem—the Gita—in the words of a great savant:

"O Thou, Sacred Singer! Thou inspired interpreter of divinity! Whatever may have been Thy name among mortals, I bow before Thee! Hail to Thee! Hail to Thee! author of that mighty poem, whose oracles lift up the soul, in joy ineffable, toward all that is sublime, eternal, divine. Full of veneration do I salute Thee, above all singers, and I worship unceasingly the trace of Thy footsteps."[1]

"Kṛṣṇa was both a warrior and a mystic. As a mystic, we know from Mahābhārata and from other Purāṇās, how Kṛṣṇa had meditated long in the Gandhamādana forest, on Puṣkara lake and on the Badari moun-

1. Schlegel—a German Scholar.

tain. This aspect of Kṛṣṇa's mystical achievement, has not been noticed by many, because like La Place, in his famous reply to Napoleon, "they have not felt the necessity for this hypothesis." It was due to the spiritual power gathered in his meditations at these three places of natural scenery, a forest, a lake, and a mountain, that Kṛṣṇa devoted himself to God, and having ultimately succeeded in realising Him, became later on, what the Gita calls Yōgēśvara and as Yōgēśvara he was responsible for the victory of the Pāṅḍavās. It is due to the spiritual power which a man gets through his meditation that he is enabled to spread the spiritual influence far and wide."[2]

"In the greater part of Mahābhārata," writes Edgerton, "Kṛṣṇa appears in a strictly human guise. In the narrative of the Gita, he is still both god and man, an incarnation of the deity in human form. In the philosophical teaching of the Gita, Kṛṣṇa has all the attributes of a full-fledged mono-theistic deity and at the same time the attributes of the Upaniṣadic Absolute."[3]

Thus "one need not view Kṛṣṇa as a superman to see that the basis of his character is not soft-heartedness but sacrificial love. He is never a fanatic. He has an all-understanding and all-seeing mind. On all the paths he sees the One: in all creeds he sees some element of the One Truth of God."[4] "Kṛṣṇa's life and teaching are, therefore, heroic, profound, charged with the wisdom and purity that sees God face to face. In Him and His flute, in Him and His words, is the fragrance of the spirit,

2. B.P.G. pp. 101-102.
3. B.P.G., p. 88.
4. G.M., p. 18.

the perfume of the forest and the field. Kṛṣṇa's flute sings in love of the cowherds and the milk-maids of Gōkul and Vṛndāvan, as Kṛṣṇa's fire passed into Arjuna's soul, making Arjuna a hero, infused with a Śakti worthy of the disciple of a great Master."[5]

Song Divine:

The Gita is, thus, a song eternal, springing from the divine lips of Sri Bhagavān—the Divine Singer. It is also Śrīmat—full of spiritual splendour. How fitting is, therefore, the title 'Śrīmat Bhagavad-Gita' given to it! The Gita is also described as the ambrosia milked from the wish-cow of the Upaniṣads, by the Master-Milkman —Kṛṣṇa, for distributing the same among the devout seekers like Arjuna. At the same time, it is a song of fire flashed out by the Lord of Yoga, to grant light, strength and solace, to the worried warriors, like Arjuna, on the sacred battlefield of life.

"The Gita claims to be a 'Dialogue', a communion of souls, between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. Beautiful is this Book not only in the music of its words but also in its thought and its vision. This inner beauty of the Gita has ravished the minds and hearts of many lands: the Gita has been translated into more than 40 languages. Whence cometh its power if not from the heart of a Holy One who has, through centuries of India's history, remained a symbol of eternal youth. He took up the flute: and as he sang, the music of his heart rang through the souls of multitudes. His song—the 'Song of God'—still our hearts doth sway, while crowns and kingdoms have passed away."[6]

5. G.M., p. 83.
6. G.M., pp. 1-2.

"Kṛṣṇa's Religion: how simple, how sublime! The Gita interprets a Faith which knows no East, no West: a Faith without a dogma, without a rite: a Faith without restrictions of race or creed: a Religion of Brotherhood, of One Life in all: a Religion of Spirit and Truth: a Religion of dedicated work, a Religion of Love. The Gita teaches how man may be perfect as Parama Puruṣa is perfect....The Gita is a master piece of thought, is a canticle of action, is a creation of spontaneous art, is a poem of beauty....The Gita enshrines the wisdom uttered on the battlefield—the wisdom of a divine poet.... a Masterman who stands as on a rock, unmoved by time, untouched by revolution."[7]

"The Gita", writes Aldous Huxley, "is one of the clearest and most comprehensive of the Perennial Philosophy ever to have been made. Hence its enduring value, not only for Indians, but for all mankind....The Bhagavadgita is perhaps the most systematic spiritual statement of the Perennial Philosophy."[8]

At the same time, it should be noted that "the Gita is not a book of practical Ethics but of Spiritual Life. It teaches not human but divine action; not the performance of social duties but the abandonment of all other standards of duty or conduct, for a selfless performance of the divine will, working through our nature; not social service but the action of the Best, the God-possessed, the Masterman, done impersonally for the sake of the world and as a sacrifice to Him who stands behind man and Nature."[9]

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7. G.M., p. 85.
8. S.G. introduction.
9. E.G., p. 29.

End and Means:

According to Sri Gurudev, "the Bhagavadgita is one of the greatest works on Mysticism that the world has ever seen." "God-realisation constitutes the Apūrvatā—novelty or the supreme contribution of the Bhagavadgita.[10] The philosophy of God-realisation is its supreme teaching. "The Gita takes its stand on the reality of spiritual experience, of which God is the factual content, even as the physical world is the factual content of sense-knowledge. It also maintains that it is possible for the individual to become directly aware of the presence of the Divine."[11]

This philosophy of God-realisation deals both with the End as well as the Means of spiritual life. Brahmavidyā or God-realisation is the End and Yoga-shāstra or Path of Union, is the Means. However, "the chief object of the Bhagavadgita is a practical one and instead of spending much labour upon a theoretical discussion of the Nature of God, it suggests to us certain methods by means of which God could be practically attained.[12]

The Gita is, thus, more practical than theoretical. "Still, as it aims at suggesting ways and means of raising the spiritual level of the whole man, it has to deal with all the three aspects of his life, namely metaphysical, moral and mystical. Because, if we take into account, the integrity of man's consciousness as a whole, it would seem absolutely impossible, in the interest of the highest development of which man's consciousness is capable, to sunder the intellectual from the moral, as the moral from

10. B.P.G., p. 138.
11. L.B., p. 11.
12. B.P.G., p. 225.

the mystical element. Intelligence without the moral back-bone, might only degenerate into the cleverest form of chicanery, and a mystic without morality, if such a one were possible, might only be a hideous creature, who is a blot on the spiritual evolution of man. And again, just as morality to be ratiocinative, must be firmly linked to the intellect, similarly for its consummation, it must end in the mystical attitude, which alone is the end and goal of the life of man. In short, Metaphysics, Morality and Mysticism are as inseparable from each other, in the interest of highest spiritual development of man, as intellect, will and emotion are inseparable for his highest psychological development."[13] Hence all these three have their own share of discussion in the Gita, which is of course done from the practical point of view. "Its appeal is, thus, to the whole man....The Gita touches our hearts, convinces our minds, and shapes our wills. It covers the whole way of man's pilgrimage to the feet of God."[14]

The Path of Yoga:

The path of Yoga depicted by the Gita, has four avenues. They are not independent ways; they are contributory and complementary to the main pathway as well as to each other. They are designed to train and develop the four principal elements of human personality, namely, the intellect, the will, the emotion and the mind proper. It is only when all these faculties have been properly trained and turned Godward, that the spiritual height of a seeker will be really elevated. The Yoga of Knowledge trains the intellect. It removes its

13. C.S., pp. 287-288.
14. L.B., p. XXVI.

doubts and satisfies its curiosity by supplying accurate knowledge about the nature of God, Universe and the Self. It places a clear picture before him about the ideal of God-realisation. The Yoga of Action trains the will by teaching it to perform all actions, in a detached manner and in a dedicated spirit—in the spirit of service to the Divine. The Yoga of Devotion infuses love and reverence for the Lord in the heart of a seeker and sublimates the emotions by teaching them to soar Godward. In the same way, the Yoga of Meditation controls the mind proper and teaches it to concentrate on the Atman or God. In this way, all these faculties are trained to focus their whole attention on God and advance Godward. Thus the aim of all these Yogas is to lift all the faculties from their worldly preoccupations, so that they might live, move and enjoy the spiritual atmosphere.

"The ideal Yogin of the Gita feels every moment that he is the servant of God and that in His service lies perfect freedom, but also perfect joy. The Gita is not a cold Gospel of Duty for duty's sake. It is a Gospel of Duty for God's sake....The Yogin of the Gita derives his strength from God in whom he consciously lives and moves and has his being." "Pure Bhakti or self-forgetting love of God, lifts us out of the region of mere morality to a spiritual plane where a higher law—the Law of Love—prevails. Thus the Bhakti-Yoga taught in the Gita is only the inside view of Karma-Yoga....In the Gita the warm emotion of Bhakti is held in its place by moral enthusiasm on the one side, and spiritual vision on the other....The intensive phase of Bhakti-Yoga is called Dhyāna-Yoga in the Gita. It consists of moments of rapt prayer when the soul lifts itself up to the heights of Eternal Being and stands speechless and satis-

fied....It is this union with God that we call Jñāna or Self-realisation. Jñāna comprises both knowledge and being....A man who is well-established in Jñāna has more or less a steady vision of the all-including spirit and acts in the light of it....He sees all beings in himself and himself in all beings. He sees the fundamental mystic unity of all things in God....It is the goal of the mystic way. It is the final stage of spiritual life." "Spiritual life, however, is not a staircase in which we can count the steps. It is a gentle slope that leads us to the feet of God."[15]

Thus Karma, Jñāna, Dhyāna and Bhakti are, according to the Gita, the four facets of one spiritual life. The seeker following the path of Yoga always thinks of God, works for God, meditates on God, loves God with all his heart, offers everything to God, realises Him and enjoys His vision and bliss.

Soulful Meditation:

Meditation is the core of this Yoga. What is the nature of soulful meditation? Let us see what a modern saint has to say about it.

"Meditation is communion with an Unseen Realm that pours its influence upon us and makes us new men. The test of this influence is life....Meditation is an experience which blooms in the presence of the Lord in daily life. This experience lifts us above the world of atoms and electrons: this experience links us with the Atman wherein Truth abides and Love is radiant and Beauty hath her eternal shrine."[16]

15. L.B., pp. XLIII-XLVIII.
16. G.M., p. 118.

"In Dhyāna, meditation, you go deeper within you. The inner being of the spirit is then revealed and every moment of your inner life becomes a part of eternity. The Self, Atman, becomes radiant in the heart—shining bright for ever and evermore. And as you do not feel tired, you rest on your Self: you abide within you. And while you are deep in the Atman, your life grows, matures, in thought and character, in aspiration and worship. You blend humanity with creative life."[17] "In meditation you develop a new focus of attention....The will is trained and gradually tuned to the Divine Will....To develop meditation, training indeed is necessary.... under the loving guidance of a Guru....Much help may be had from an inspired scripture....Group meditation does great good."[18] "In meditation, seek to be receptive. Relax yourself. Let your effort be towards effortlessness. Seek to sink from conscious activity into silence: set your will at rest."[19]

Sri Gurudev has prescribed three types of meditation for the realisation of God: (i) Ideological meditation, (ii) Moral meditation, and (iii) Mystical meditation. He maintained that Metaphysics, Ethics and Mysticism should lead to these three types of meditation. He has, therefore, tried to utilise the teaching of the Gita regarding metaphysics, ethics and mysticism for making the meditation sincere, soulful and effective. For this, he has made a fine selection of the relevant and important verses from the Gita, re-arranged them and has prepared this Dhyāna-Gita, specially meant to aid our meditation.

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17. G.M., p. 118.
18. G.M., pp. 113-87-98.
19. G.M., p. 99.

Therefore, as advised by Dr. Radhakrishnan elsewhere: "let us set aside a few minutes everyday for prayer and meditation; let us take up a verse or two of the Gita (from this book), and read slowly; let each word sink into our consciousness, let its meaning pass into our mind; let its meaning literally engrave itself on our thoughts. If we start our day's work with such a feeling, we will not forget that we live here for a purpose larger than we see."[20]

Plan of this Volume:

The present volume has two parts. Part I entitled 'Light Eternal' being the elucidation of the Dhyāna-Gita, contains six 'Flashes' in all. Flash I which is a Prologue to it, depicts the 'Glory of the Gita.' Flash II deals with Metaphysics contained in the first three chapters of Dhyāna Gita. Flash III deals with the Ethics described in the next four chapters. Flash IV tries to delineate the Mysticism or the Mystic Pathway presented in the three chapters that follow, while Flash V throws some light on the Spiritual Experience mentioned occasionally in all the chapters and specially described in the eleventh chapter. Flash VI which serves as an Epilogue, gives the resume of the whole discussion, conveys the Lord's assurance contained in the last chapter of the Dhyāna-Gita as well as the Message Eternal of the Gita. We have, thus, tried to present the Light Eternal of the Dhyāna-Gita, almost in the words of Sri Gurudev and the Gita as rendered by us in English. We have merely supplied here and there, a few links to connect the ideas and added a few comments to elucidate certain problems. Of course these are offered with

20. L.B., p. VII.

the help of Sri Gurudev's other works as well as the works of some other saints and savants.

Part II entitled 'Gita for Meditation' contains the free English rendering of Dhyāna-Gita which has got twelve chapters in all. A casual glance at the headings of these chapters would clearly show how the arrangement made by Sri Gurudev is quite novel as well as systematic. These chapters contain 365 verses selected from the Gita. Each chapter is made up of a few groups of verses varying from one to ten or even more. A suitable Marāthi heading was given by Gurudev to each group and a Sanskrit heading to a collection of such groups. These groups were arranged by him in an ideological sequence suited to the subject of the respective chapter.

This volume attempts to give the elucidation as well as the translation of Sri Gurudev's Dhyāna-Gita for the use and guidance of sincere Sādhakas.

FLASH II

METAPHYSICS

Practical View:

Metaphysics is the product of the hunger of human intellect to know the Ultimate Reality. Really, intellect has been the special gift of God to man, to serve him as a guide in his worldly life. It is the torch that illumines his path when he is overtaken by the darkness of doubt, despair and delusion. Properly approached, it can give him a full glimpse—a correct view—of his life, teach him to discriminate between the essential and the non-essential and enable him to fix his ideal—his *summum bonum.* It will also show him the way leading to it. Nor is it all. Human intellect even aspires to have a vision of the life beyond the physical. But then, on account of its inherent limitations, this aspiration lands it in the region of antinomies. It formulates theories about the nature of Reality that naturally contradict one another, giving rise to conflicting claims. It is only when it shows the proper way of life, leading to the awakening of intuition and actual realisation of Reality, that it will be able to reconcile these antinomies and grant eternal peace and bliss. Thus Meta-

physics should lead to Mysticism to fulfil its real purpose.

The Gita looks at the problems of metaphysics from a practical point of view. It does not indulge in a theoretical discussion about them. Neither is it interested in it, as it is primarily concerned with God-realisation and the pathway leading to it. But in the course of the dialogue it has also casually given expression to its own view, mainly based on mystical experience, regarding the nature of God, Absolute, Self and the World. This we shall find in the first three chapters of Dhyāna-Gita. The present Flash proposes to give the essence of the same for the benefit of the sincere seekers along with the method suggested by Sri Gurudev to properly utilise the same for their meditation.

Nature of the Lord:

There is One Spiritual Energy—One Ultimate Reality—that is pervading the universe, sustaining and guiding it. The whole universe springs from it, lives in it and is ultimately dissolved in it. It has been named as God, Absolute, Lord, Spirit, Self, etc., in accordance with different aspects from which it is looked at. It is both Personal (Saguṇa) and Impersonal (Nirguṇa); both Transcendent and Immanent. The Personal aspect of Reality is called Puruṣōttama—Supreme Person or Īśvara—Lord—by the Gita while the Impersonal aspect is named Parabrahman—Supreme Spirit. The Īśvara of the Gita is the eternal Lord who pervades and sustains the three worlds.

The Lord is both immanent and transcendent. He is the Sūtraṁ—Thread—passing through all the exist-

ences and souls. He is the Rasa—Mellifluous Essence—of the universe. He is immanent in the form of qualities and seed. He is the fragrance in the earth, taste in the water, light and brilliance in the Sun, the Moon and fire, and sound in the ether. He is the intelligence and splendour of the intelligent and the splendid and the strength of the strong free from desire and passion. He is the life in all existences. He is the Vaiśvānara—the highest individual and supreme Spirit. He is the friend, supporter and Lord of this universe. He is the father, and the mother, the giver and remover of all things. He is the goal, the abode, and the refuge of all. He is the origin, the resting place and the end of all beings.

The Lord, however, is a great artificer—Māyī. He creates a camouflage around Him by his supernatural power of Yoga, so that no one is able to know Him. But when righteousness declines, and unrighteousness reigns supreme, He takes birth in the world, from age to age, to protect the good and destroy the wicked. Still He is absolutely transcendent. He pervades the whole universe with a fraction of His and remains outside as well. All the grace, glory and power, displayed in this universe, have sprung from merely a spark of His lustre.

Nature of the Absolute:

Just as Īśvara—Lord—is primarily the personal and immanent aspect of God, Parabrahman—Absolute—is His impersonal and transcendent aspect. The Absolute is without beginning and without end. It is infinite and eternal. Just as the all-pervading ether is not conta-

minated on account of its subtlety, the Atman—Paramātman—in the body, is not at all contaminated by it. As the sun illumines the whole world, the Atman illumines the object. He transcends the five causes of action and remains merely a spectator. The Supreme Person is not an enjoyer, even though He is the Supreme Lord of the body. With His hands and feet, His eyes and ears, His faces and heads everywhere, He dwells in the world enveloping all. He appears to possess the faculties of all the senses, without having any of the senses. Though unattached, He sustains all; though free from qualities, He seems to enjoy them. He is both within and without all beings. He moves, yet He does not move. He is both far and near. He is indivisible, and yet He appears to be divided among beings. He is the Light of all lights and is beyond darkness. He dwells in the hearts of all, yet He is too subtle to be known. Who could, therefore, claim to know God who is all wonder?

As pointed out by Sri Gurudev: "Both in respect of the nature of God and the vision of God, the Upaniṣads stand as an ideal to which the Bhagavadgita always points. In fact we may say that the highest peak ever reached in the whole range of Indian or European thought in regard to the nature and vision of God, is to be found in the Upaniṣads themselves.... (Hence) Bhagavadgita is regarded and justly regarded as offering a faint replica of the doctrines of the Upaniṣads. We must, however, remember that though the Gita derived its inspiration from the Upaniṣads, it had to consider the problem in a setting peculiarly its own."[1]

1. B.P.G., p. 226.

However, "there are two contrary statements made about this (Absolute) in the Bhagavadgita and the Upaniṣads. The Bhagavadgita talks of *Sarvataḥ pāṇi-pādaṁ tat*' and the Upaniṣads of *Apānipādo javano grahītā*. How are these points of view to be reconciled? Is God with hands and feet? Or is He without hands and feet? The Gita tells us that we have to consider God as...having hands and feet everywhere. Are these merely imaginary? That is the important question.... Arjuna saw God with hands and other organs everywhere.... These are mystical manifestations of God to an aspirant in the process of realisation."[2] The Gita also speaks of Him as *Sarvēṅdriya-vivarjitaṁ*. Hence there appears to be no contradiction.

Antinomies Reconciled:

In the description of the nature of God given in the last two sections, we find three antinomies—contraditctory statements, i.e., "one law pitted against the other."

(i) The antinomy of the Personal and the Impersonal—Saguṇa and Nirguṇa.

(ii) The antinomy of the Transcendent and the Immanent, and

(iii) The antinomy of the Actor and the Spectator.

The Gita has supplied their reconciliations as well. The Gita stresses one conception in one place, and the second in another place and suggests the reconciliation by combining both, in a third place. Thus, "the antinomy of the Personal and the Impersonal is reconciled by the

2. B.P.G., p. 44.

doctrine of Trans-personalism; the antinomy of the Transcendent and the Immanent is reconciled by what we may call, for want of a more suitable word, Transcendo-Immanence, and the antinomy of the Actor and the Spectator is reconciled by the doctrine of Emanationism."[3] The Gita could bring about this reconciliation because its approach has been mystical rather than intellectual. It is only when God-realisation becomes the be-all and end-all of existence and when Reality is looked at from the mystical point of view, that such reconciliation becomes possible.

Thus, "this mystical view of Reality alone will enable us to reconcile all intellectual dogmas that have infested the philosophies of the world. What we experience, what we feel, and what we realise should alone constitute our philosophy."[4] From that point of view, the mystical nature of Reality displays, according to the Gita, the following features: "(i) God is the greatest miracle—everything about Him is miraculous. (ii) Nobody has been able to know His ultimate nature and (iii) He alone probably is able to know Himself. Divine Self-consciousness alone, thus, constitutes the Ultimate Reality."[5]

Nature of the World:

While describing the nature of God, the Gita has incidentally described the nature of the world, as well. The world, says the Gita, has sprung up from the Lord, lives in Him and is to be finally dissolved in Him. The Lord is the origin, the end and the resting place of the

3. B.P.G., p. 190.
4. B.P.G., p. 191.
5. B.P.G, p. 192.

world. The Lord created it through His Prakṛti—His Nature which is two-fold: the lower—*Aparā* and the higher—*Parā*. Earth, water, fire, air, ether, understandding and self-sense, constitute His lower nature, and the Soul (life principle) by which this world is sustained is His higher nature. This is the birth-place of all existences.

The world has also been likened by the Gita to an Aśvattha—the peepal tree, with its roots above and branches below, indicating its origin in God. The three Guṇās nourish its branches, and the different objects of sense are its foliage. This tree, like the Banyan, has sent its roots below in the world of men which become the springs of their actions. These roots of attachment to the objects, have gone deep down in the world, have become firm there and have pinned human beings to this world. As this world is *Anitya*—evanescent and *Asukha*—full of misery, the Gita exhorts people to cut down these firm roots with the strong sword of detachment and carry on the search for the Lord and aspire to seek and worship Him.

About the nature of the world there has long been raging a controversy, as to whether it is to be regarded as real or unreal. There are passages in the Gita like *Bhūmirāpōnalōvāyuḥ* etc., which speaks unmistakably about its reality. Both the conceptions of *Parā* and *Aparā Prakṛti* are realistic. While the conception of *Aśvattha* which means *'Na śvaḥa api tiṣṭhati'*—that which will not last till to-morrow—suggests its unreality. The reconciliation of the reality and unreality of the world is achieved, says the Gita, by the doctrine of ephemeralism or *'Vyaktamadhya.'*

"Things come into existence and depart in a short while. We cannot say that they do not exist. They exist only for a short span of time. Behind them there is infinity, before them there is infinity. Only a speck of our existence is what we might call *Vyaktamadhya.* Students of Carlyle know very well his doctrine of ephemeralism. 'A little while ago and you were not; a little while after and you are not.' You are concerned with the spacious present, the here and now, the passing moment which may be regarded either as real or unreal."[6]

Nature of the Self:

The Self, according to the Gita, is the spark of the eternal Divine Fire. Seated in the heart of man, He attracts the five senses and the mind. He enjoys the objects of sense through the ear, the eye, the touch, the tongue, the nose, as well as the mind. He passes, while in this body, through childhood, youth, and age. So does He pass on to another body. Death is, thus merely a change of the body. As a person throws off worn out clothes and wears new ones, so does the embodied Self throws away worn out bodies and enters new ones. Seers could see Him both when He lives in the body as well as when He leaves it.

So far as the nature of the next birth of the Self is concerned, it is the thought at the time of death that determines it. The last thought decides the next birth. Whatever existence a man thinks of, at the time of passing away, he attains that existence as he is ever absorbed in that thought. Therefore, he who meditates on God,

6. B.P.G., p. 188.

with an undivided mind, as a result of constant practice, at the time of death, reaches the form Divine. There is no further worldly existence for those who are solely attached and devoted to God. They are not caught in the whirl of creation and dissolution. As they are ever established in the state of God-realisation, they attain Divine Bliss.

But this perfection is not easily reached. It requires constant, continuous practice which may extend even to many lives. As the fickle mind easily strays away from the path of Yoga, it fails to attain perfection. But the Gita assures us that none who tries for God-realisation shall ever perish. He will eventually take birth in the house of the pious, or in the family of the enlightened Yogins, regain the understanding of the previous body, strive more vigorously than before, and carried forward by his previous practice, will become perfect and attain his supreme goal of God-realisation, even through many births.

Ideological Meditation :

As we have seen already, "the chief object of the Gita is a practical one and therefore, instead of spending much labour upon a theoretical discussion of the Nature of God, it suggests to us certain methods by means of which God could be practically attained." "These methods are the ideological methods, the moral method and the mystical method."[7] We shall try to have a glimpse of the first method here and deal with the remaining two in the next two Flashes.

In this method we are to meditate on the idea of

7. B.P.G., pp. 225-226.

God. Sri Gurudev has selected the following ten conceptions from the Gita for our meditation and has asked us to concentrate on them:

1. *Puruṣōttama:* The first is the conception of Puruṣōttama or the Highest Person. He is the all-pervading Paramātman who rules over all material and spiritual existences alike.
2. *Sūtra:* The second is Sūtra—the immanent thread of all existence. God is a Sūtra which passes through all objects, mental as well as physical. He is the Aṅtaryāmin.
3. *Vaiśvānara:* The third is Vaiśvānara—the Highest individual and Supreme Spirit, which inhabits and enlivens all animate and inanimate existences.
4. *Ravi:* The fourth is Ravi—the Sun of the World of Ideas. Like the sun, the Atman is responsible for generation and growth of all objects in the world. Similarly, God, like the sun, is a great transcendent Being.
5. *Māyī:* The fifth is Māyī—the great artificer. God lives in a camouflage and does not allow Himself to be seen.
6. *Rasa:* The sixth is Rasa—the mellifluous essence of all existences. It is that Amṛta—nectar—by tasting which one reaches supreme beatification or bliss.
7. *Tajjalān:* This is the seventh idea which means the supreme source of all generation, growth, and decay. Along with it we should meditate on the following verse:

गतिर्भर्ता: प्रभु: साक्षी निवास: शरणं सुहृत् ।
प्रभव: प्रलय: स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ।। (IX-18)

This is "one of the finest verses in the spiritual literature."

8. *Adhiṣṭhāna:* or the Absolutely Transcendent Being is the eighth idea. God has pervaded the whole by a part of His and has remained infinitely outside.

9. *Jñēya:* the highest object of knowledge is the ninth idea. Philosophically we might contemplate on God as transcending all dualities. Mystically, we might 'think' about it as having hands and feet everywhere.

10. *Āścharya:* the greatest wonder of all wonders God cannot be seen and cannot be heard.

"What a great panorama of supreme objects of meditation would there be now for you! You may not be sure that such an ideological meditation would put you in possession of God. But at least it would take you a few steps ahead in your spiritual pursuit."[8]

8. B.P.G., pp. 240-245.

FLIASH III

ETHICS

Practical View :

Ethics is the science and art of human conduct and character. As science, it evaluates the different goods in life, and tries to determine the *summum bonum*—the highest good. As an art, it shows the right way of life, trains the will, moulds the conduct and character and gradually leads a man towards the *summum bonum.* Thus Ethics stands midway between Metaphysics and Mysticism. It takes its stand on the metaphysical truths and culminates in the development of mystical attitude. It, thus, points out the good as well as the right so that we might adopt the right and attain the good.

Here also the Gita takes a practical view. It does not indulge in the theoretical discussion regarding the nature of the good and the right. It straightaway tells us that the worldly life is evanescent and miserable and that God alone is eternal and blissful. Therefore the bliss of God-realisation is the only good which we should aspire after. It describes the three original Guṇās of human nature as the source of his vices and virtues. It then points out the main vices and virtues and asks us

to destroy the former and cultivate the latter. Later on, it has also shown the nature of right action which we are asked to adopt if at all we aspire to achieve the highest good by transcending the three Guṇās and Karmas—qualities and actions. We find a systematic presentation of all these ideas in the next four chapters of Dhyāna-Gita, the essence of which has been given below along with the method of moral meditation suggested by Śri Gurudev.

The Three Guṇās:

The Gita tells us that there are three Guṇās or qualities that spring up from Nature or Prakṛti. The soul inherits them from Nature and is attached to the body as well as the objects through them. They are called Satva, Rajas and Tamas. Satva is of the nature of 'Purity', Rajas of 'Passion' and Tamas of 'Sloth.' The soul inheriting Satva aspires for God-realisation and bliss; the soul full of Rajas, passionately desires to possess different sense-objects from which it seeks sense-pleasure. Hence it is constantly engaged in various activities for achieving these objects. A Tāmasic soul is ever under the spell of delusion born of ignorance and seeks pleasure in sloth and sleep alone. Hence, those that are established in Satva rise upwards, those who are full of Rajas, reside in the middle and those that are steeped in Tamas descend into the infernal regions.

These qualities are not only present in the agent—*Kartā,* they also permeate his intellect and actions as well as his renunciation, knowledge and happiness. A Sātvic or 'Pure' agent is free from attachment and egoism, and is unaffected by success or failure. A Rājasic

or 'Passionate' agent is selfish and greedy and is affected by joy and sorrow; while a Tāmasic or 'Slothful' one is rash, deceitful and despondent. The intellect of the 'Pure' is capable of distinguishing right from wrong, worldly life from spiritual life. The intellect of the 'Passionate' does not properly understand what is right and what is wrong, while the intellect of the 'Slothful' takes a perverted view of all things. The penance and charity of the 'Pure' are marked with supreme faith and self-control as well as with a pure sense of duty and non-attachment to fruits. Those of the 'Passionate' are performed with a selfish motive, while those of the 'Slothful' are done with the object of troubling others.

A 'Pure' person performs his prescribed actions purely from a sense of duty and renounces all attachment to them and their fruits. A 'Passionate' person renounces his actions through the fear of physical pain, while the 'Slothful' does the same through delusion. In the same way, the knowledge by which the One Imperishable Being is seen in all existences, is 'Pure', that which sees different entities separately is 'Passionate' and that which is irrational is 'Slothful'. Finally 'Pure' happiness springs from the realisation of the Atman. It is poison-like in the beginning but nectar-like at the end. 'Passionate' happiness arises from the contact of the senses with their objects and is nectar-like in the beginning but is like poison at the end. Happiness that springs from sleep and sloth and deludes the soul is considered to be 'Slothful'.

These Guṇas exercise a great influence on all the creatures. Even the wise are not free from their influence. They can be transcended only through unswer-

ving devotion to the Lord. Such devotees alone become fit for attaining the Absolute.

Worst Enemies :

We have seen how the Guṇas are the sources of vices and virtues—the former springing from Rajas and Tamas, and latter from Satva. Moral life consists in the destruction of the vices and cultivation of virtues. A seeker should first try to destroy the vices before he can try to cultivate virtues.

All the vices are our worst enemies. But Kāma—desire or lust—springing from passion, this monster full of greed and sin, is the eternal arch-enemy. The senses, mind and intellect, are his spring-boards. Through them does he delude the soul. Therefore, an aspirant should first control the senses and then the mind. Instead of musing over the objects, which entails a chain of evils, he should try to realise the Atman and destroy the enemy of lust through Self-knowledge. Because, even though sense-objects turn away by his effort at self-control, the relish for them remains behind, which can only disappear by the vision of the Supreme Atman. A seeker who is thus freed from the arch-enemy of lust and his accomplices—anger and avarice—easily achieves his spiritual welfare and eventually attains the highest ideal.

Best Friends :

Just as vices are a seeker's worst enemies, virtues are his best friends. Hence, after annihilating the enemies, he should try to welcome his friends. He should begin to cultivate virtues. Now what are the main virtues? How are they to be cultivated? Can they be cultivated at all? The Gita has given him sufficient free-

dom to do so. It exhorts all to uplift themselves, never to degrade themselves. Their rise and fall are entirely in their hands. In this endeavour of theirs, their Self will come to their aid. If they sincerely endeavour to conquer their lower self with the higher Self, the Self will prove to be their best brother, but if they allow their lower self to dominate them, the Self Himself will prove to be their worst enemy. Therefore, a genuine attempt to uplift themselves is absolutely necessary if they are to attain the highest good for which the cultivation of at least the chief virtues is essential.

Such an attempt involves and begins with self-conquering or self-discipline which has two aspects: one negative and the other positive. The former consists in self-control—in separating the senses from their objects (Dama) and withdrawing the mind from the senses (Śama). This will, as seen already, enable a seeker to conquer all his vices and cultivate their opposite virtues. Attachment would, thus, give room to detachment, violence to non-violence, etc. The positive aspect of self-discipline, consists in single-mindedness, in dwelling on the virtues and the Atman, in directing and concentrating the whole attention on them. This is achieved by Moral Meditation which has been briefly pointed out at the close of this Flash. For facilitating this concentration the senses should be taught to endure heat and cold, pleasure and pain, and the mind should be trained to cultivate equality of vision. Thus these individual virtues viz., self-discipline, single-mindedness, endurance and equanimity are the necessary pre-requisites for the cultivation of other virtues.

The social virtues mentioned thereafter, belong to

Triple Penance, Duties of the four Varṇas, and Divine Heritage. Purity, continence, non-violence and worship of the wise constitute the Penance of the body. Truthful and pleasant speech, study of the scriptures constitute the Penance of the speech; while cheerfulness, gentleness, and silence constitute the Penance of the mind. Faith, forgiveness, and wisdom are some of the natural duties of a Brahmin. Heroism, generosity and rulership are those of a Kṣatriya. Agriculture, trade and cow-protection are those of a Vaiśya, and service that of a Śūdra. The Gita, at the same time, assures us that all those who discharge their respective duties sincerely will attain perfection.

Then follows the enumeration of virtues belonging to a person of Divine Heritage. They are: Fearlessness, Steadfastness, Charity, Sacrifice, Tranquillity, Compassion, Vigour, Fortitude, etc. After that, the Gita describes the prominent vices of persons belonging to the Demoniac Heritage and tells us that it is the Divine Heritage alone that brings liberation, while the Demoniac Heritage leads to bondage and exhorts the seekers to try to cultivate the virtues and imbibe the Divine Heritage.

Centralisation of Virtues :

The Gita, according to Sri Gurudev, is not satisfied merely with the enumeration and analytical study of virtues. It has tried in its own way, to tackle the important problem of centralisation of virtues—to show how they are all aspects of one central virtue. In one place (Ch. XIII) it has been stated that virtues alone constitute knowledge, while in the other (Ch. XII) that God-devotion is the central virtue. These may be regarded as illustrations of such an attempt.

Sri Gurudev, in his book on the Gita, has made a systematic attempt to show how God-devotion runs like a thread through some selected virtues mentioned in the Gita. For that he has made a necklace of twelve principal virtues. We have selected six out of them and tried to show in his own words how they are all expressions of the central principle of God-devotion.

1. *Karuṇā or Compassion:* This is evidently an expression of praying for mercy from God. One of the cardinal principles of such praying for mercy from God would be to treat others as our own selves. Hence arises the necessity of showing compassion to all creatures. If God is in all men, God-love must manifest itself through compassion to all human beings.

2. *Śauca or Purity:* No bad idea dare enter our soul if it is once filled with God. Ours is a jealous God and He would not allow any pretender to the throne.

3. *Abhaya or Fearlessness:* When we have reached a high stage of God-realisation, fearlessness follows on the heels of our experience.आनंद ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् न विभेति कदाचन। This is the reason why a saint is absolutely fearless.

4. *Śānti or Peace:* Such a life would lead us to that cardinal criterion of God-realisation, namely Śānti or Peace. The Peace and Bliss of God are interdependent and are perfected together.

5. *Īśvara-bhāva or Lordliness:* A God-realiser does find himself to be the Lord of all he surveys. He is like a pinnacle. He stands alone to himself in his solitary greatness and with

power to do good whenever and wherever he likes.

6. *Paricharyā or Service:* In spite of such Lordliness, he serves humanity. In fact, this service is the result of it. The supreme value of God-realisation for oneself is to create conditions for the realisation of God in and for others. This, in short, is the consummation of the supreme moralistic teaching of the Gita."[9]

Activism :

Activism is one of the most important theories of the Ethical Ideal. But the activism of the Gita is not merely a pure Karmavād or detached activism—activism associated with detachment—advocating duty for duty's sake. On the other hand, it is Karma-Yoga or dedicated activism—activism actuated by the devotion to the Lord. Thus it serves to be a link between Ethics and Mysticism. Its Karma aspect belongs to Ethics, while the Yoga aspect belongs to Mysticism. But as both the aspects are inextricably fused together, we are required to deal with the whole Karma Yoga here, even though we would, thereby, be anticipating the subject matter of the next Flash.

It cannot be gainsaid that the Gita primarily advocates Karma Yoga—the life of dedicated activism."[10] "To work is your duty" declares the Gita. Who enjoins the duty? It is Nature—Prakṛti; it is the Guṇas born of Nature (स्वभावप्रभवा:) that do it. Nature goads and guides all beings and they quietly follow her dic-

9. B.P.G., p. 215.
10. B.P.G., p. 196.

tates. But why should a man work? Because, says the Gita, it is his nature to work. Moreover, he will have to work for his very existence. "If you don't work," says the Gita, "you cannot maintain yourself." Secondly, just as activity is essential for maintenance (शरीर-यात्रा) it is also necessary for social welfare (लोकसंग्रह) as well as for keeping the wheel of the universe moving. Therefore, "work you must," is the categorical imperative of the Gita.

But how to work? "योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि" exhorts the Gita, "be fixed in Yoga and do your assigned work." "Renounce attachment to and the fruits of your action. Maintain equanimity in success and failure and work. At the same time, perform your work skilfully (कौशलम्). The holy actions of sacrifice, charity and penance, performed in this way will purify you and hence they deserve your first preference. Moreover, let your actions be properly dedicated to the Lord. Let them be performed in a spirit of sacrifice to keep the wheel of sacrifice moving as it is necessary for the preservation of the universe." But let it be remembered that the Gita prizes the eternal principle of sacrifice more than its actual form. The sacrifice might assume any form. It may be द्रव्ययज्ञ, तपोयज्ञ, योगयज्ञ, ज्ञानयज्ञ—sacrifice of material objects or sacrifice in the form of Penance, Yoga or Knowledge. The principle involved in them all is and should be one and the same. It consists in offering the best in us, either to a Personal God or to an Impersonal Brahman. It may be the worship of the Lord with the flowers of our actions or depositing our actions in the Brahman. (ब्रह्मणि आधाय कर्माणि ।)

Now, how to worship the Lord with our actions? We should perform our actions by considering ourselves as instruments of God and offer their fruits to Him. How are we to deposit our actions in the Brahman? Here the word ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिः would suggest the clue. Our sacrificial action should first be ब्रह्मकर्म– Karma meant for the realisation of Brahman. And it should then lead to Samādhi—to the actual realisation of Brahman everywhere. All the activities should partake of the nature of Brahman. In either case, what a seeker is actually expected to do is to work with the hands and simultaneously meditate on God with the mind. That is the proper worship with actions; that is the proper depositing of actions in the Brahman. The former is the outcome of devotion, the latter, of knowledge.

Sacrifice is really a cow of plenty. The Creator has granted it to all. It will yield everything they want. Through sacrifice they should receive the gifts from the gods; but should offer the gifts back to them and enjoy only the remnant of the sacrifice. "We must hand over the profits of our actions to men and God and partake only the residue that is left."[11] That will enable us to taste the spiritual nectar, the divine ambrosia. Thus purity of mind, grace from above and the bliss of the spiritual nectar are the gifts of the performance of duty in a spirit of sacrifice. And ultimately such a performance of duty would enable a seeker to transcend both the Guṇas and the Karmas and realise the bliss of the Atman.

The psychological, moral and social characteristics

11. B.G.P., p. 201.

of such an Ideal Saint who embodies the Ethical Ideal, will be dealt with, along with his mystical characteristics, in the fifth Flash. We shall, therefore, close this Flash with a brief description of Moral Meditation suggested by Sri Gurudev.

Moral Meditation :

Moral Meditation consists in meditation on different virtues. If we harbour a particular virtue for a long time, we would be able to cultivate it. "Patanjali has told us that our mind becomes pure and gathers a force and a power when we concentrate upon such ethical conceptions as sympathy— मैत्री,— compassion —करुणा contentment— मुदिता, and detachment— उपेक्षा. No virtue could be contemplated on unless we have practised that particular virtue day after day in our life. In that way habit becomes character.... The practice of ethical virtues is really higher than dwelling on the metaphysical ideas."[12]

But it must be remembered that the value of their stabilisation, though great, is still limited. "They may not take you to God. They will give you the gun-powder; only a spark might be required and then there might be a spiritual explosion."[13]

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12. B.G.P., pp. 247-48.
13. B.P.G., p. 248.

FLASH IV

MYSTICISM

Nature of the Pathway :

Mysticism deals with the Pathway to God as well as Spiritual Experience. It has been defined as 'a direct, intuitive apprehension of God.' The Gita calls it Yoga. As we have seen already this Yoga—the Path of Union with Divinity—has four avenues, specially designed to train the four main faculties of a seeker. The Karma-Yoga trains the will and teaches it detachment and dedication; the Jñāna-Yoga trains the intellect and teaches it discrimination and insight, the Dhyāna-Yoga trains the mind proper and teaches it concentration, while the Bhakti-Yoga sublimates the emotion and culminates in dedicated devotion. When all these faculties are sufficiently developed and when dedication, discrimination, concentration and devotion are fused together, they would awaken the dormant intuition in the seeker which would give him a glimpse of Reality and enable him to enjoy the blessed vision and bliss of God. Thus, as stated by the author, elsewhere, it may be noted that "there is a fine intermingling and inter-dependence among them. In the course of their gradual

evolution, each helps the other and is being helped by the other. Thus they go on evolving and reach perfection only after mingling and losing themselves in the Eternal Perfection viz., God."[1]

We shall try to delineate the nature of all these Yogas briefly and close this Flash by giving an outline of the main aspects of Mystical Meditation—the principal Sādhana of God-realisation.

Karma-Yoga :

We have discussed in detail the nature of Karma-Yoga in the last Flash. We here intend to elaborate the spirit of sacrifice or dedication—the central core of Karma-Yoga. As "the senses have been created by God with a tendency to move outward, man looks outside himself rather than inside himself." He is naturally attached to sense-objects and sense-pleasures and is constantly engaged in trying to possess the objects and enjoy the pleasure. He is, thus, attached both to the actions as well as to the fruits. His attachment to the actions arises from the feeling that he is the agent of the actions or from the feeling of 'I' and 'Mine' and his attachment to the fruits arises from the supreme value he attaches to the sense-pleasure. Hence to turn his attention from both these, he should be taught to realise that it is God seated in his heart, all the while whirling him as He wills, who is the real agent, and that he should not, hence, feel elated by the success and depressed by the failure in his endeavour. He should also be convinced that the bliss of God-realisation is infinitely superior to the sense-pleasure.

1. R.L.L., p. 207.

This conviction would naturally induce him to pause, consider and evaluate the nature of the pursuit he is engaged in. Then in due course, he would perceive the shortcomings of his present pursuit, and begin to search for a superior substitute. At this stage, if he is fortunate in getting the guidance of an enlightened Guru, he realises from him the supreme importance of the bliss of God-vision. At the same time, he becomes aware of the omnipotence of God. He ascertains from his teacher how, not a blade of grass moves but by His will and how he himself is merely a puppet in His all-powerful hands. This knowledge humbles his pride and makes him prepared to dedicate all his actions to God. Thus we find that the principle of dedication of actions to God presupposes all these factors—awareness of the all-powerful God, reverence and devotion for Him as well as faith in His mercy and blissfulness.

The Gita also points out how a seeker should dedicate his actions to God. He is to work with the hands and meditate on God with the mind. That is the practical method suggested by the Gitā. When a Sādhaka adopts this Sādhana lovingly and sincerely and practises it for a long time, he will be able to realise the Atman and enjoy His bliss. Eventually, he will sport with the Atman and be satisfied with the company of the Atman. Phenomenal activism will, in this way, evolve into spiritual activism.

Jñāna-Yoga :

The Jñāna Yoga of the Gita is both intellectual comprehension as well as intuitional apprehension or illumination. "Jñāna might be taken to mean" writes Sri Gurudev, "either knowledge on the one hand, or

illumination on the other, and very often, illumination is a better word than knowledge."[2] Just as the Greek word 'theoria' means (i) vision or perception, (ii) intellection or knowledge and (iii) ecstasy or illumination, the Sanskrit word Jñāna, according to Sri Gurudev, implies all these. Hence a philosophy of Jñāna, says he, might well be called a philosophy of theoretism.[3]

The Gita proposes to impart this highest knowledge by knowing which nothing remains to be known here. The fire of this knowledge is capable of burning all actions. This Self-knowledge or Self-illumination removes the capacity of the actions to sow fresh seeds, firstly by annihilating the attachment for the action as well as for its fruits, and secondly by making the agent dedicate them to the Divine. This is Jñāna-yajña,—sacrifice in the form of knowledge—which excels all other kinds of sacrifices. Thus the action culminates in knowledge.

This Yogic tradition of Self-knowledge is really an ancient one. It has been handed down from time immemorial by the Seer to the seeker, in regular succession. But this Self-knowledge is very difficult to attain, firstly because, the river of Yoga disappears from time to time and appears again after a long period. "The spiritual life goes underground from time to time.... The great artificer God thus finds it necessary—for what purpose we do know—to hide the river of spiritual experience for the time being."[4] Secondly, rare is the man who has realised God. "It is only he who has realised his identity with God who is capable of imparting the

2. B.P.G., pp. 193-94.
3. B.P.G., p. 198.
4. B.P.G., p. 237.

secret of spiritual life."[5] Morever, vast amount of time is absolutely necessary for achieving perfection in this Yoga as well as for the complete assimilation of that all-purifying knowledge.

Now how to approach these realised Seers for Self-knowledge? A seeker should be very humble. He should bow before him and serve him. "He should ask him all sorts of questions, if he has got the power, and if the Seer has the time and inclination to answer. In that way he might be able to get an iota or a fraction of insight into the spiritual life if he condescends to reply to the questions."[6] Thus the seeker should learn the knowledge by humble reverence, by repeated questions to and service of the Seers who alone are capable of imparting it.

When once a seeker begins to tread the path of knowledge, it will enable him to reach perfection without any serious obstacles. Even a little achievement in it will save him from great fear. Thus he will attain the Supreme Person by developing one-pointed devotion. He will realise God as the source and abode of all beings and ultimately merge in Him. He will attain equality of vision in God. Even the most sinful of all sinners will cross over all the sins by the boat of this Divine Knowledge. Such is the unparalleled merit of this knowledge.

Dhyāna-Yoga :

If the intellectual Self-knowledge is to lead to intuitional Self-realisation, a seeker should be able to con-

5. B.P.G., p. 237.
6. B.P.G., p. 238.

centrate his mind on the Atman. How that is actually to be done, can be learnt directly from the Seers. But for that a good deal of preliminary preparation is needed. The Gita has dealt with it at some length. Very valuable practical suggestions have been given which constitute the method of Mystical Meditation, thus enabling the seeker to achieve the desired goal.

There are four elements in this method of meditation: (i) The physiological element; (ii) The psycho-ethical element; (iii) The devotional element, and (iv) The element of Grace. Out of these the first two elements alone are dealt with in this section. The last two will be considered at the close of this Flash.

(i) *Physiological Element:* Āsana-posture—is the first item in this element. A seeker should set his firm seat in a pure place. Any Āsana in which he can continue his meditation for a long time and with ease, is the one that is good for him. He should hold his body, head and neck erect and still. The sight is the second item. He should fix his gaze steadily on the tip of the nose without looking in any other direction. Breath-control is the third item. The seeker should then equalise *Prāṇa* and *Apāna.* That will lead to mental equilibrium that is so very useful for spiritual contemplation.

(ii) *Psycho-ethical Element:* The fickle mind of a seeker should be controlled by practice and dispassion. Senses must be sacrificed in the fire of self-control. A seeker should try to conquer Kāma or lust. He should renounce all desires and restrain the mind from all senses and concentrate it on the Atman. Let him not think of anything else. When he is, thus, free from all

desires and has his disciplined mind concentrated on the Atman by attaining tranquillity, it would remain steady in the Atman like the flame of a lamp undisturbed by the wind. He would then have the vision of the Atman through the awakened intuition and enjoy the bliss of the Atman. But before he has the privilege of achieving this goal, he will have to develop and achieve the other two elements elaborated at the close.

The Yogi, then, sees his Atman in all beings and all the beings in the Atman. He sees God everywhere and sees everything in God. He attains such an equality of vision. The supreme bliss which he enjoys through this vision of the Atman, cannot be dislodged from him, even by stupendous sorrow. This Supreme Bliss means Self-realisation. This Bliss is Brahman. Brahman hovers round about a Yogi who enjoys the bliss of the Atman within. Such a Yogi is superior to a man of knowledge as well as a man of action and a Yogi full of devotion is superior to all other Yogis.

Bhakti-Yoga :

Thus we arrive at the central teaching of the Gita —that of devotion and surrender to the Lord. In this respect, the Gita appears to prefer Saguna Upāsanā to Avyakta Upāsanā, as it considers the latter to be more difficult than the former. The Gita considers those devotees to be the best who are endowed with supreme faith, and who are ever united with God through meditation. It also maintains that those who work for the Lord and meditate on Him with single-minded devotion would be taken by Him across the ocean of worldly life.

The whole world is deluded by the three-fold Guṇas

of Nature. Therefore it fails to know the eternal Lord. Only those who have purified themselves by penance and taken refuge in the Lord, are able to know Him. The wicked do not and cannot feel devotion for Him. But those whose sin has vanished, would feel inclined to worship Him. Hence it is an encouraging assurance by the Gita that even a vile man endowed with intense devotion and right resolve, can become a sage and attain eternal Peace. "Know it to be certain" assures Sri Kṛṣṇa, "that My devotee never perishes!" The devotees may belong to any race, caste or class. They are equally dear to the Lord. If they desperately call on the Lord for liberation from old age and death, they can achieve their cherished object by realising Him.

Such devotees meditate on the Lord with undivided mind. They know Him to be the source of all beings, glorify Him and worship Him with devotion. They are filled with devotion and with their minds fixed on the Lord, they are absorbed in one another's bliss. To such devout Yogis the Lord shows the path of intellect, i.e., He gives a particular bent to their intellect and volition. Then with the object of showing compassion, He enkindles the lamp of the Atman before them. The Lord also bears the burden of acquisition and preservation of such devotees as they worship Him with constancy and single-mindedness.

Such a devotee is the crest-jewel of the wise. He fixes his mind and intellect on God and is ever engaged in meditation. He becomes cheerful in mind, regards all beings alike and attains supreme devotion to the Lord. Through such devotion he knows His essence, realises Him fully and enters into Him.

Mystical Meditation—its Core :

The next two elements of Mystical Meditation which we had reserved for consideration form the core—the essence—of such Meditation.

(iii) *Devotional Element:* "Unless we fell an earnest devotion to God, i.e., Bhāva or Bhakti, nothing would be of any avail whatsoever....We should be inspired with one-pointed devotion towards God....We must not, however, fail to note that Bhāva or Bhakti, an unexplained and inexplicable love of God, is a fundamental requirement.... Unless there is an element of 'Śaraṇagamana' or surrender in our devotion and we resign ourselves completely to the Power and Will of God, no great achievement in spiritual life is possible.... Finally, the Bhagavadgita tells us that it is only through one-pointed devotion to God that one may be able to know Him, see Him and enter into Him."[7]

(iv) *The Element of Grace:* "The last element necessary for the success of our spiritual meditation is the Grace of God....God must be moved and it is only when He is moved that He will move the world by His Grace....The Grace of God descends upon the aspirant who is nearing his perfection, in three stages. God gives a particular bent to his intellect and volition, a stimulus and a direction in which he might work. That is Buddhi-Yoga. Secondly, after he has worked unceasingly for a long time, he becomes the recipient of God's Anukaṁpā —compassion. And finally God crowns his efforts with the gift of His blessing. God actually delivers His goods."[8]

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7. B.P.G., pp. 254-255.
8. B.P.G., p. 255-256.

FLASH V

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

God-Vision :

Now we shall proceed to the consideration of the nature of Spiritual Experience. In this connection, we shall first deal with the criteria of spiritual experience, and then try to give an idea of the nature of God-vision described in the Gita. The Gita does not contain an elaborate description of the different types of spiritual experience. Here and there we get a casual reference to the Morphic and Photic visions as well as to the Vision of Equality and of the Atman. The Cosmic Vision alone has received detailed consideration at some length. The Bliss arising from God-vision is also mentioned in a few places. Moreover, the references to different experiences except that of Cosmic Vision, are all more implicit than explicit.

After the consideration of God-vision we shall deal with the chief characteristics of an ideal sage who enjoys all these spiritual experiences and embodies and displays various salutary effects of God-realisation. He is an embodiment of the highest ideal which the Gita places

before us and marks the culmination of the spiritual Sādhana enjoined by the Gita.

Criteria :

In one famous line the Gita describes the spiritual experience as follows:

प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् । (IX-2). Here the words प्रत्यक्षावगमम्, सुसुखम्, अव्ययम् are significant. They contain in themselves all the criteria of spiritual experience.

प्रत्यक्षावगमं indicates that the seeker should have a direct perception of Divinity. He should see God face to face. This does not, of course, refer to physical eye as God cannot be seen with the physical eye. Therefore, it obviously refers to the inner eye of intuition, which is supersensuous. Hence this word indicates the supersensuous and intuitive nature of spiritual experience.

The word सुसुख suggests that the spiritual experience is full of bliss. The bliss referred to, however, is not sensual pleasure. It is आत्यन्तिकसुख — in tense bliss which is अतीन्द्रिय — supersensuous. It infinitely excels sense-pleasure and mental happiness. It is attained through the vision of the Atman, on gaining which the seeker feels that there is no greater gain and established in which he is not moved even by the greatest sorrow. This is the supreme bliss which has been called शान्ति and निर्वाण by the Gita. This is the second criterion indicating the beatificatory nature of spiritual experience.

अव्यय means "continuity or permanence which also

subsumes universality. The spiritual experience must be permanent. It must be present at all times, and in all states of consciousness. Daily growth of spiritual experience is also a vital factor in its continuity."[1] Thus our spiritual experience must be continuous, must be marked by daily growth and universality. This is the third important criterion mentioned by the Gita. Experiences which do not exhibit these criteria need not, therefore, be considered to be spiritual.

Morphic and Photic Visions:

The Gita describes God in one place as follows:

सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत् सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् । (XIII-13) as having hands and feet, as well as eyes, heads and faces everywhere. Arjuna also sees God with an infinite number of faces and eyes, hands and feet. This is Morphic experience—the experience of form. The Gita also speaks of अन्तर्ज्योतिः inner light, सूर्यसहस्रस्य भाः the illumination of thousand suns which is a Photic experience—experience of light. It also refers to the infinite number of colours and shapes which Arjuna is credited to see in the Cosmic Vision.

Vision of Equality is a higher form of Morphic vision. The Gita refers to such a vision in the following line. समं पश्यन् हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम् । (XIII—28). Śri Gurudev has very well given the various interpretations which this line is capable of. "Firstly, it means," says he, "that the mystic sees God in all beings and on all beings....Secondly, he sees God in a symmetrical and harmonious fashion. Finally, he sees the form of God continuously." Hence this Equality suggests "this kind

1. B.P.G., p. 233.

of harmonious, symmetrical and continuous vision of God."[2]

Vision of the Atman:

"In one cryptic verse the Gita tells us:

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।

यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति । (VI—20).

Vision of the Atman by the Atman has been mentioned here."[3] It describes the ecstatic vision of the Self by the Self, which is similar to the one described in the Maitri Upaniṣad where we are told that "at the time of the acme of spiritual experience the mystic sees his own form in a flood of supreme light arising from within himself, which indeed constitutes the realisation of the immortal and fearless Atman."[4]

"There has been no other writer, except Jñaneśvar, who draws out the secret meaning of this verse of the Gita in such an excellent manner. He tells us: 'When the tree of unreality has been cut by the sword of Self-knowledge, then...one is able to see one's own form, one's own Self. This, however, is not to be compared to the reflection in a mirror; for, the reflection in a mirror is simply an other of the seeing man....One must see without seeing. One must know without knowing. That is the Primary Being from which everything comes.... That is this Existence, which exists in itself and for itself....after reaching which, there is no return."[5]

2. B.P.G., p. 269.
3. B.P.G., p. 257.
4. C.S., p. 345.
5. B.P.G., pp. 258-59.

Cosmic Vision:

Finally, the Lord showed Arjuna his Cosmic Vision, as he was extremely eager to see it. But before He showed the vision, He granted Arjuna a divine eye. He opened his eye of intuition which alone was capable of seeing it. "Arjuna was, thus, lifted up and brought face to face with the manifestation of God as He pervaded the whole universe."[6]

In its unbounded vastness, infinite variety and dazzling brilliance, The Cosmic Vision was simply unparalleled. It stretched from earth to heaven and enveloped all the quarters. It had neither beginning, nor middle, nor end. Inside this space-filling appearance, there were various forms with infinite colours and shapes. This Universal Form of God had infinite number of hands and feet, eyes and ears, heads and faces. It had worn several divine ornaments and held many divine weapons. It had the unique effulgence of thousand suns. If the lustre of million suns were to flash forth at one and the same time, it might resemble the splendour of the exalted Lord, illumined at the same time by enchanting colours and lights. Such was the wonderful Form which kept Arjuna spell-bound.

However, this was not all. The Lord later on revealed His terrific Form as well which struck extreme terror into the heart of Arjuna. This Form had numerous mouths with terrible fangs. They had been all wide open. All the warriors on both sides, as well as all other people, were rushing into this fiery mouth with an accelerated speed, like moths rushing into the flame.

6. B.P.G., p. 271.

They were all crushed to death with their heads being pounded between His teeth. This Form was "devouring the worlds themselves with flaming mouths and licking His tongue for want of satiety."[7]

Arjuna felt joy in the beginning because of the novelty of the vision which he had never seen before. But soon this joy was transformed into mortal fear. There was thus a mingling of joy and fear in the heart of Arjuna. However, the terror that overpowered him was infinitely greater than the joy. It entered the very marrow of his system and made him tremble from head to foot. He also saw that all the three worlds as well, were quaking with mortal fear like him, at the sight of this terrific Form of God. He, therefore, prayed God to be gracious to withdraw this terrible Form of His, and reveal His former beautiful Form. When the Lord observed this sad plight of Arjuna, He thundered: "Arjuna! I am the God of Death—the destroyer of the world. I have already slain all these brave kings and warriors in spite of you. Arise! fight and conquer the enemies! Don't fear! I have shown this Form to you because you happen to be My beloved devotee—a Form which is not and cannot be seen by anybody else." Finally, the Lord told him that this Resplendent, Infinite, Universal Form of His can be seen and entered into, only through single-minded devotion. Hence devotees like Arjuna alone can see and enter into Him.

Bliss of God-vision:

Such God-vision naturally brings ecstatic bliss in its train. It has been termed आत्यन्तिकसुख, शान्ति and निर्वाण

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7. B.P.G., p. 273.

by the Gita. It arises, says the Gita, from ब्रह्मसंस्पर्श—direct contact with the Brahman. It is अतीन्द्रिय or super-sensuous and is infinitely superior to sense-pleasure as well as mental happiness. "The bliss of a saint is as much above the happiness of Socrates as that happiness is above the pleasure of a pig."[8] Ultimately the Gita identifies the bliss enjoyed by a saint with Brahman Himself. "The enjoyment of the ecstatic bliss has been considered to be the same thing as becoming one with Brahman."[9]

Ideal Sage:

Now let us see what the Gita has to say about the characteristics of such a realised soul. This Ideal Sage of the Gita has been described as गुणातीत, परमभक्त, and स्थितप्रज्ञ or a person who has transcended all the Guṇas, become a beloved Devotee of the Lord and acquired supreme equanimity. All these persons possess similar qualities. Hence, with the characteristics of an Equanimous Saint as our basis, we shall bring together the chief characteristics from all these persons and try to give them under these four heads: (i) Psychological, (ii) Moral, (iii) Social, and (iv) Mystical, as is done by Sri Gurudev.

(i) Psychological: The Ideal Sage withdraws his mind and senses from the objects of sense, just as a tortoise withdraws its limbs, and maintains perfect equanimity—mental equilibrium. He is neither elated by success, nor depressed by failure. He transcends the dualities of heat and cold, pleasure and pain, honour and dishonour.

8. B.P.G., p. 233.
9. B.P.G., p. 224.

(ii) Moral: He is free from desire of any kind. His mental ocean does not overflow with the influx of the streams of desires. They never disturb the balance of his mind.

(iii) Social: He is सर्वभूतहितरत or interested in working for the welfare of all beings on earth as he has an equality of vision in all of them. To him, a bird and a beast, a Chaṅḍāla and a Brāhmin are all alike. This is the natural outcome of the vision of God everywhere.

(iv) Mystical: समता or equanimity is, thus, the ethico-mystical characteristic of an Ideal Sage. "Round about him is moving the Brahman—अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते । (V—26). Wherever his eye is cast, he sees God. If he looks ahead of himself, he sees God. If he looks behind, he sees God."[10] This is the purely mystical characteristic.

"Finally, a saint who has realised God, cannot remain to himself. He must come in contact with souls similar to himself. Communion of saints, therefore, becomes not merely an ideal but the practice of such saints."....Because, "there is an inexpressible joy in the partaking of bliss, not merely for oneself but in the company of those who have been recipients of a similar bliss. It is in this manner that the saints become responsible for the spreading of God's Gospel."[11] "One has only to remember that it becomes the mission of such a realiser to spread the Gospel of God, whenever and wherever it becomes possible for him to do so. One God, One World, One Humanity, should be his maxim, Theo-

10. B.P.G., p. 223.
11. B.P.G., p. 269.

polity his doctrine. Whosoever realises the presence of God, can never but direct his life in such a way that the greatness of God becomes not merely understood but also achievable."[12]

12. B.P.G., p. 136.

FLASH VI

EPILOGUE

(Assurance and Message)

Résumé:

Let us now cast a passing glance at the Light Eternal of the Gita that we have seen so far. The Gita has derived its supreme glory from the Divine Singer who was a Yōgēśvara—Lord of the Yoga. Through His unique Yogic power, He could send enchanting music from His flute and captivate the hearts of the devotees. At the same time, He could give a clarion call from the battle-field and inspire courage into the unnerved heart of a warrior. The present Song—the Gita—sung on the battle-field, has been supplying light, strength and peace to many a depressed warrior in the battle-field of life. For the last 2000 years, the Gita has been carrying the Eternal Torch of hope, confidence, courage and bliss for guiding and goading the weary pilgrim ahead, in his Life's Pilgrimage. The message of the Gita is universal and is meant for all.

Our Dhyāna-Gita is the systematised essence of the Gita. All the main aspects of the End as well as the

Means, contained in the Gita have been systematically arranged in it. What is the End—the Ideal—that the Gita places before the aspirants? God-realisation is the ideal of the Gita. What is the nature of God? There are three aspects of God that are referred to in it. Parabrahman is His Impersonal aspect, and Puruṣottama or Īśvara is His Personal aspect. Both are alike, immanent and transcendent. Īśvara or Lord is the Ruler of the Universe and Jiva or Self is the ruler of the body. These two also are immanent and transcendent. They pervade the universe and the body respectively but are not touched by them. The Self is the spark of the Divine. And hence its chief duty is to be united with the Lord.

However, the Self has been bound down to this world by a natural attraction for its objects. Really the world as well as its objects are evanescent. They are associated with misery. The pleasure with which they captivate the Self is quite illusory. It is really misery in disguise. But through ignorance, the Self fails to realise its nature and revels in its enjoyment.

It is only a proper knowledge of the power and glory of God and of the relative worthlessness of sensual pleasure, that is capable of bringing about a turn in the attitude of an aspirant. It would loosen the grip of that attachment for sense-objects and gradually develop and deepen the attachment for God. His love for worldly objects would make room for love of God. Gradually this desire for pleasure (Kāma) would be replaced by devotion for God (Bhakti). If Kāma is the father of vice, Bhakti is the mother of virtues. Hence from a life of vice the aspirant is slowly weaned and is persuaded to lead a life of virtue. And Bhakti being the

crown of all virtues, it is not a far cry from a life of virtue to that of devotion.

For the proper development of devotion, continuous training in detachment and dedication is necessary. Hence the Gita wants the aspirants to perform their duties, in a spirit of detachment and learn to dedicate them to the Lord. He is advised to work with the hands and meditate on God with the mind. This would in due course develop devotion in him and lead him to Self-knowledge.

The Gita tells us that only realised souls are capable of imparting Self-knowledge. So, an aspirant should approach such a Saint, with utmost humility, serve him well, ask him all sorts of questions and acquire this knowledge from him. When this Self-knowledge is coupled with one-pointed devotion, it would enable the seeker to realise and merge in the Supreme Lord.

This process of realisation is greatly expedited by meditation. The Gita gives detailed instructions regarding the method of meditation which deserves to be carefully practised by all the aspirants. This soulful meditation would soon enable a seeker to have a vision of the Atman and would land him in the region of Divine Bliss. The Gita, finally, tells us that of all the Yogis engaged in meditation, the Yogin full of devotion is the best. Such a devoted Yogin who is constantly meditating on the Lord and who has surrendered everything to Him, easily becomes the recipient of His grace. God gives a particular bent to his intellect and enkindles the lamp of Self-knowledge before him. The devotee, thereafter, sees the whole world filled with God.

Then follows the consideration of spiritual experience. Morphic and Photic visions, the Vision of the Atman as well as the Cosmic Vision have been dealt with; the last one, in some detail. At the sight of the Cosmic Vision which was both sublime and terrible, Arjuna felt great joy and mortal fear. He prayed God to withdraw it which He readily did. The Lord, however, told him that he alone could have the rare privilege of having a look at such a Vision because he had been His beloved devotee. It is only through single-minded devotion that the devotees could know, see, and enter into the Universal Form of God.

Assurance.

Finally, the Lord gave the following assurance to all the devotees through Arjuna:

"Mentally surrendering all your actions to Me, fix your mind on Me and be absorbed in Me. If you thus constantly meditate on Me, through My grace, you will surmount all calamities. But if you don't listen to Me through pride, you will be utterly ruined. Nature will overpower you and compel you to perform action in spite of your wish to the contrary.

The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings and whirls them by His mysterious power. Hence, seek refuge in Him only with all your heart, and surrender all your duties to Him. Through His grace, you will attain supreme peace and eternal abode.

Therefore, fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice everything to Me and bow to Me. You will cer-

tainly come to Me. This is My sure assurance to you for, you are dear to Me."

Message Eternal:

I cannot do well but to close this brief Flash by conveying the Message Eternal of the Gita in the inspiring words of two of our eminent modern saints:

"Life is not for the sake of life alone, but for God.... Know, then, your Self; know your true Self to be God and one with the Self of all others; know your soul to be portion of God; live in what you know; live in the Self; live in your supreme spiritual nature, and be united with God and be God-like. Offer first, all your actions as the sacrifice to the Highest and the One in you and to the Highest and the One in the world; deliver last, what you are and do, into His hands for the Supreme and Universal Spirit to do through you His own will and work in the world."[1]

"Know thyself; know truly thine own heart: for in the heart shineth the light—the light of the Atman. Knowing thine heart, thou shalt know too, thine own worth—the divine dignity of thy life. Surrender it not to the senses: see thy Self and in the seeing, see thy Lord. Behold the whole cosmos is doing service to the Atman: the very stars serve thee! So keep away from carnal pleasures; seek thy joy in thy Dharma, thy duty, in the Self within thee. Stand up! Arise! Awake! Slumber not! The Infinite is within thee. Eternal Śakti is within thee. In bondage it lies: an Asura keeps it chained. Arise! Slay the Asura with the sword of humility and wisdom. Awake! Break the chains! Be free!

1. S.G., p. 510.

"Life is testing thee. Work, but without egoism.... Act renouncing all fruits of act! Act, following the light of the Atman, silently. So mayest thou, in action, attain endless peace!....Resign thy all who is all-in-all. Be thou lord of the senses and thou wilt win victory....Sit thou still—yet not idle—sit thou at peace, godlike, in the city which hath nine gates."

Him meditating still
Him seeking and with Him blended
Stayed on Him in every act
The souls illumined, to Him devoted still
Their sins washed away by wisdom
Reach the place of 'no-return,'
And in freedom for ever abide,
Ever enjoying Bliss Divine."[2]

When Kṛṣṇa—the Lord of Yoga—and Arjuna—the Lord of Action—unite, they will surely bring victory and prosperity, both material and spiritual!

2. G.M., pp. 136-138.

PART II

Gita for Meditation

(Translation)

1. Nature of God.
2. Nature of the Absolute
3. Nature of the Self
4. Transcendence of the three Guṇas
5. Destruction of the Arch-enemy
6. Bunch of Virtues
7. Yoga of Action
8. Yoga of Knowledge
9. Yoga of Meditation
10. Yoga of Devotion
11. Cosmic Vision
12. Lord's Assurance

A Seeker

Absorbed in Meditation

Deserves to become Brahman;

Acquires

My Supreme Devotion,

Realises

My Essential Nature,

And

Finally enters Me.

—*Śri Gurudev.*

CHAPTER I

Nature of God

(1) The Supreme Person

We should cut down the Aśvattha (Tree of Creation) with the sword of detachment and begin our search for the Supreme Person.

Sri Bhagavān said:

Aśvattha, the Tree of Creation, has its roots above and branches below. It is considered to be imperishable. The Vedas are its leaves and he who knows it, knows the Vedas. 1.

Its branches spread above and below. They are nourished by the three Guṇas and give out shoots of sense-objects. It also sends its roots deep down in the world of men which become springs of actions. 2.

Its real form is not perceived here, nor its end, nor its origin, nor its existence. Having cut down this firm-rooted tree with the strong sword of detachment— 3.

One should seek that place from which those that have reached it, never return saying "I would seek re-

fuge in that Primeval Person from whom has sprung up this eternal world." 4.

(Ch. XV.)

The Perishable, the Imperishable and the Supreme Person.

These are the two Persons in the world—the Perishable and the Imperishable. All the creatures constitute the Perishable and the Soul is called the Imperishable. 16.

But the Highest Person is other than these; He is called the Supreme Spirit. He is the eternal Lord who pervades and sustains the three worlds. 17.

As I am superior to both the Perishable and the Imperishable I am well-known in the world and in the Vedas as the Supreme Person. 18.

(Ch. XV.)

(2) The Thread

I am the Thread passing through all the existences and souls.

Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, understanding and self-sense—such is the eight-fold division of My nature. 4.

This is My lower nature. The Soul by which this world is sustained—know that to be, O mighty Arjuna! My other, higher nature. 5.

Know this to be the birth-place of all existences. I am the origin of all this world as well as its dissolution. 6.

There is nothing whatever that is higher than I, O Dhanañjaya. All this is threaded on Me as rows of gems on a string. 7.

(Ch. VII.)

(3) Mellifluous Essence

(Taste, Essence and Bliss)

Universal immanence of God in the form of qualities and seed.

I am the taste in the waters, O Son of Kuṅti! I am the light in the Moon and the Sun. I am the syllable Oṁ in all the Vedas. I am the sound in the ether and manliness in men. 8.

I am the pure fragrance in the earth and brilliance in the fire. I am the life in all existences and the austerity in the ascetics. 9.

Know Me O Pārtha! to be the eternal seed of all existences. I am the intelligence of the intelligent; I am the splendour of the splendid. 10.

I am the strength of the strong, free from desire and passion. I am the desire in the creatures, O Prince of Bhārat! which does not conflict with the Law. 11.

All the entities—whether pure, passionate or slothful—know them to be born of Me alone. However, I am not in them; they are in Me. 12.

(Ch. VII.)

(4) The Highest Individual and Supreme Spirit

I am the individual and supreme Spirit, immanent in all existences and it is I who illumine the sun and the moon.

The lustre of the sun and the moon that illumine the whole world and that which is present in the fire—know that to be Mine. 12.

I enter the earth and sustain all beings by My vital energy. I become the nectarian sap and nourish all herbs. 13.

I become the fire of life dwelling in the bodies of creatures. I digest the four kinds of food by uniting with the life-breaths—Prāṇa and Apāna. 14.

(Ch. XV.)

(5) The Sacrifice

I am the sacrifice and the sacrificer; I am the father and the mother; I am the abode and the goal; I am the giver and remover of all things.

I am the sacrifice. I am the worship. I am the oblation to the departed souls. I am the herb. I am the hymn, I am the melted butter; I am the fire and the offering. 16.

I am the father, the mother, the grandfather and the sustainer of this universe. I am the Holy One to be known. I am the syllable Oṁ. I am also the three Vedas—Ṛk, Sāma and Yajus. 17.

I am the goal, the abode, and the refuge; I am the witness, the friend, the supporter and the lord; I am the origin, the end and resting place; I am the treasure and the seed imperishable. 18.

I radiate heat; I restrain and shower rain; I am immortality as well as death; I am both the being and the non-being O Arjuna! 19.

(Ch. IX.)

(6) The Great Artificer

As I create around Me a camouflage, through My supernatural power of Yoga, no one is able to know Me.

Ignorant people consider Me to be endowed with form, even when I am unmanifest, not knowing My supreme nature which is eternal and excellent. 24.

Veiled by My supernatural power, I am not manifest to all. This deluded folk does not recognise Me as the unborn and eternal (Supreme Spirit). 25.

I know the beings that are past, that are present and that are to come, O Arjuna! but none knows Me. 26.

(Ch. VII.)

(7) Divine Incarnation

When righteousness declines and unrighteousness reigns supreme, God is required to take a birth to protect the good and destroy the wicked.

Though I am an unborn, eternal Lord of all creatures, I direct My Nature and take birth through My superb power. 6.

Whenever there is a decline of righteousness and rise of unrighteousness, O Bhārata, I incarnate Myself. 7.

To protect the good, to destroy the wicked and to establish the supremacy of righteousness, I am born from age to age. 8.

(Ch. IV.)

(8) The Absolutely Transcendent Being

Everything that is endowed with strength, glory and splendour, is the product of a spark of My lustre.

Whatsoever is glorious, graceful and powerful, know that to have sprung from a spark of My lustre. 41
(Ch. X.)

I have pervaded the whole universe with a fraction of Mine and have remained outside as well.

But where is the need of all this detailed knowledge, O Arjuna! I stand supporting this universe with a fragment of Myself. 42.
(Ch. X.)

CHAPTER II

Nature of the Absolute

(1) IMPERISHABLE

The Reality is imperishable—immortal; It has brought forth all this extension (universe).

Sri Bhagavān said:

The unreal has no existence, the real never ceases to exist. The essential nature of both these has been perceived by seers of Truth. 16.

Know that to be imperishable by which all this is pervaded. None can destroy this which is indestructible. 17.

(Ch. II.)

The Atman is not born; neither does He kill, nor die.

He who considers that the Atman kills and that He is killed, both of them are ignorant. He neither kills, nor is He killed. 19.

The Atman is never born, nor does He ever die, nor having once come to be, will He again cease to be. For He is unborn, eternal, everlasting and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain. 20

(Ch. II.)

The Atman is neither cut by the weapons, nor burnt by fire.

Weapons can not cut Him, nor can fire burn Him. Water can not wet Him, nor wind make Him dry. 23.

He cannot be cut; He cannot be burnt; He cannot be wetted; nor can He be dried. He is eternal, omnipresent, stable and immovable. He is the same for ever. 24.

(Ch. II.)

(2) Uncontaminated

Atman is uncontaminated like ether.

Just as the all-pervading ether is not contaminated on account of its subtlety, so the Atman that is present everywhere in the body, is not at all contaminated by it. 32.

(Ch. XIII.)

(3) Illuminating

The Atman illuminates all the objects like the sun.

O Bhārata! as the sun illumines this whole world, so does the Atman illumine this entire body. 33.

(Ch. XIII.)

(4) Non-doer

The Atman transcends the five causes of action; He is Absolute and non-doer.

Learn from Me, O mighty Arjuna! that as stated in the Sānkhya system, these are the five causes that bring about the accomplishment of all actions. 13.

The seat, the agent (jīvātmā), various instruments,

and diverse activities—the presiding deity being the fifth. 14.

Whatever action a man performs with his body, speech and mind, be it right or wrong, these five are its causes. 15.

Such being the case, a man of impure mind who, on account of his perverse understanding, considers the absolute Atman, as the agent, does not properly see at all. 16.

(Ch. XVIII.)

The Lord does not connect actions with their fruits; nor does He accept the merit and sin (of the people).

The Lord does not determine the agency and actions of the people. Nor does He bring about the contact of actions and their fruits. It is Nature that functions. 14.

Nor does the omnipresent Lord take on the sin as well as the merit of any. Knowledge is veiled by ignorance and thereby the mortals are bewildered. 15.

(Ch. V.)

(5) Non-enjoyer

The Supreme Person, who is a witness and sustainer, but not an enjoyer, may be called the Supreme Self.

The superior Person in the body is called a witness and an approver, a supporter but not an enjoyer, the sovereign Lord and Superior Spirit. 22.

(Ch. XIII.)

(6) Unknowable

That which is far and near, within and without,

which has its eyes and ears everywhere—that alone is the highest object of knowledge.

Now I shall describe that which is the highest object of knowledge, by knowing which the knower gains immortality. It is that Supreme Brahman who is beginningless and who is said to be neither being, nor non-being. 12.

Everywhere are His hands and feet, His eyes and ears, His faces and heads. He dwells in the world enveloping all. 13.

He appears to possess the faculties of all the senses, without having any of the senses. Though unattached, He sustains all; though free from qualities, He seems to enjoy them. 14.

He is both without and within all beings; He moves, yet He does not move. He is too subtle to be known. He is both far and near. 15.

He is indivisible and yet He appears to be divided among beings. He is to be known as the Creator, the Sustainer and Destroyer of the beings. 16.

He is the Light of all lights and is beyond darkness. He is knowledge, object of knowledge and the goal of knowledge. He dwells in the hearts of all. 17.

(Ch. XIII.)

(7) The Greatest Wonder of all Wonders

Who has known God who is all wonder?

Some look upon Him as a wonder; some others speak of Him as a wonder; some others hear of Him as a wonder; and even after hearing about Him, none ever knows Him. 29.

(Ch. II.)

CHAPTER III

Nature of the Self

(1) Stay and Departure

I am Myself assuming the form of the Self in this world, with a single spark of Mine.

Sri Bhagavān said:

The Self in the world of life, is an eternal spark of Myself. It attracts the five senses and the mind that rest in Nature. 7.

(Ch. XV.)

The stay and departure of the Self is directly visualised by the wise sages and the yogis.

When the Self, the Lord, leaves one body and takes up another, He takes these (senses and mind) with Him even as the wind carries away fragrance from the retreat. 8.

He enjoys the objects of sense through the ear, the eye, the touch, the tongue, the nose as well as the mind. 9.

When He departs, stays and enjoys and is endowed with the three attributes, it is only the wise who perceive Him and not the deluded. 10.

Yogis ever striving to have Him, see the Self seated in their hearts. But the thoughtless, with impure hearts, will never have the vision of the Self, with all their best efforts. 11.

(Ch. XV.)

(2) Memory of Past Births

You don't remember the past births while I do.

I have passed through many lives, O Arjuna, and so have you. I know them all but you do not. 5.

(Ch. IV.)

(3) Death is a mere Change

Like childhood, youth and old-age death also is a change in the body.

You grieve for those for whom you should not grieve, and yet you speak words of wisdom. Really wise men grieve neither for the dead, nor for the living. 11.

Never was there a time when neither I, nor you, nor these rulers of men did not exist. Nor will there be a time, hereafter, when we shall all cease to exist. 12.

As the soul in this body passes through childhood, youth and old-age, so does it pass to another body. The wise man is not deluded by this. 13.

(Ch. II.)

The soul abandons old bodies and puts on new ones.

As a person throws off worn out clothes and wears

new ones, so, does the embodied soul throws away worn out bodies and enters new ones. 22.

(Ch. II.)

(4) Thought Determines the Future

He who meditates on God with undivided mind as a result of constant practice, at the time of death, reaches the form Divine.

He who contemplates the Supreme Divine Person, with his mind attuned by constant practice to Him alone and none else, reaches O Pārtha! that Supreme Divine Person. 8.

He who contemplates on the Seer, the Primeval Being, the Ruler, the Supporter of all, who is subtler than the subtle, whose form is beyond comprehension, who possesses the lustre of the sun and transcends all darkness— 9.

He who contemplates at the time of departure, with a steady mind full of devotion, and with the strength of Yogic concentration, fixes his life-force well between his eyebrows, attains that Supreme Divine Person. 10.

Controlling all the gates of the body, confining the mind in the heart, fixing ones life-force in the head—thus remaining steadfast in Yogic concentration— 12.

He who departs, reciting the one-syllabled OM, denoting Brahman, remembering Me as he leaves his body, reaches the Supreme State. 13.

(Ch. VIII.)

The last thought decides the next birth.

Whatever existence a man thinks of, at the time of

passing away, he attains that existence only as he is ever absorbed in that thought. 6.

(Ch. VIII.)

(5) Non-return

There is no further worldly existence for those who are solely attached and devoted to God.

Those who always think of Him, are merged in Him, are attached and solely devoted to Him, have their sins wiped out by their wisdom and reach a state from which there is no return. 17.

(Ch. V.)

The sages who attain My likeness as a result of this superior wisdom, are not caught in the whirl of creation and dissolution.

Those who grow into My likeness, by resorting to this wisdom are not born even at the time of creation, nor are they tormented at the time of dissolution. 2.

(Ch. XIV.)

None can return to this miserable worldly existence, when once they merge in Me.

The great souls who have reached the highest perfection, by coming to Me, do not get back to rebirth, which is an abode of sorrow, and is of a transitory nature. 15.

(Ch. VIII.)

He who remains in the state of God-realisation at the time of death alone attains Divine Bliss.

Such is O Pārtha! the state of God-realisation, by

attaining which a person is never deluded. And once established in that state even at the time of death, he enjoys the Bliss of Brahman. 72.

(Ch. II.)

(6) Perfection through many Lives

He who has faith but who cannot put forth requisite effort, can attain perfection by taking right birth.

Arjuna said:

O Kṛṣṇa! if a man endowed with faith, whose mind not being under control, strays away from Yoga, fails to attain perfection in Yoga, what fate does he meet with? 37.

Bewildered on the Pathway to God, without a firm foot-hold to stand upon, does he not perish O Kṛṣṇa! like a rent cloud, by falling from both (God-realisation and worldly enjoyment)? 38.

Sri Bhagavān said:

Dear Pārtha! he will not perish either in this world or in the next. For none who tries for God-realisation, will ever meet with ill-fate. 40.

The man who has fallen from Yoga, goes to the region of the righteous. And having resided there for good many years, takes birth in the house of the pious and the rich. 41.

Or, he will be born in the family of the enlightened Yogins. But such a birth is hard to have in this world. 42.

There he regains the understanding of his previous body, O Arjuna! and strives more vigorously than before, for attaining perfection. 43.

He is carried forward by his previous practice, in spite of himself. Thus, even a seeker of Yoga transcends the Vedic rule. 44.

But a Yogi who practises with diligence, is purged of all sins; and becoming perfect through many births, attains the Supreme Goal. 45.

(Ch. VI.)

CHAPTER IV

Transcendence of the Three Gunas

(1) THE BONDS OF THE GUNAS

The nature of Satwa, Rajas and Tamas and their bondage.

Sri Bhagavān said:

The Guṇās, Satwa (Purity), Rajas (Passion), and Tamas (Sloth) are the products of Nature. They fasten down the immortal Self, O Arjuna! to the body. 5.

Of these, Satwa, being flawless, is illuminating and health-giving. It binds, O Arjuna! with the attachment of happiness and knowledge. 6.

O Son of Kunti! Know Rajas to be full of passion born of thirst and attachment. It binds the soul through attachment to action. 7.

Know further that Tamas, born of ignorance deludes all creatures; It binds, O Bhārata, the soul through the attachment to torpor, sloth and sleep. 8.

(Ch. XIV.)

(2) THE GROWTH OF THE GUNAS

The growth of Satwa, Rajas and Tamas and its results.

When all the gates of the body, viz., the senses and the mind, are illumined by knowledge, then Satwa may be considered to be predominant. 11.

When Rajas increases, O Prince of Bhāratas! greed, activity, enterprise, unrest and desire spring up. 12.

And with the growth of Tamas, O Arjuna! darkness, stagnation, carelessness and delusion—all these arise in the mind. 13.

Those who are established in Satwa (Purity) rise upwards; those who are full of Rajas (Passion) remain in the middle (regions); and those who are steeped in Tamas (Sloth) of lower nature, descend into the infernal regions. 18.

(Ch. XIV.)

(3) The Function of the Three Gunas

Knowledge

Three kinds of knowledge.

Know that knowledge to be Sātwic (Pure) by which One Imperishable Being is seen in all existences—undivided in the divided. 20.

Know that knowledge to be Rājasic (Passionate) which sees separately different entities of various kinds in all beings. 21.

But that knowledge is declared to be Tāmasic (Slothful) which clings to single work as if it were the whole and which is irrational, unreal and narrow. 22.

(Ch. XVIII.)

Happiness

Three kinds of happiness.

That happiness is 'Pure' which is poison-like in the

beginning but nectar-like at the end and which springs from the clear knowledge of the soul. 37.

The happiness which arises from the contact of the senses with their objects and which is like nectar in the beginning and like poison at the end, is considered to be 'Passionate'. 38.

The happiness that deludes the soul both in the beginning as well as at the end, and which springs from sleep, sloth and carelessness, is declared to be 'Slothful.' 39.

(Ch. XVIII.)

Intellect

Three kinds of intellect.

Pārtha! that intellect is 'Pure', which distinguishes between worldly life and spiritual life, between duty and non-duty, between what is to be feared and what is not be feared, and between bondage and liberation. 30.

That intellect which does not properly understand what is right and what is wrong, what should be done and what should not be done, O Pārtha! is of the nature of 'Passion.' 31.

While that intellect which, overtaken by ignorance, considers wrong as right, and takes a perverted view of all things, is of the nature of 'Sloth' O Pārtha! 32.

(Ch. XVIII.)

Doer

Three kinds of doer.

That doer is called 'Pure' who is free from attachment, and egoism, who is endowed with firmness and zeal, and who is unaffected by success or failure. 26.

The doer who is passionate and greedy, who is harmful and impure, who seeks the fruits of his action and is affected by joy and sorrow is declared to be 'Passionate'. 27.

While the doer who is uncontrolled, deceitful, malicious, indolent, despondent and procrastinating, is said to be Slothful'. 28.

(Ch. XVIII.)

Food

Three kinds of food.

Foods that promote longevity, vitality, strength, health, happiness and cheerfulness, and that are sweet, bland, nourishing, and agreeable are liked by the 'Pure'. 8.

Foods which are bitter, sour, salted, very hot, pungent, dry, and burning, and which bring about pain, grief and illness, are the favourites of the 'Passionate'. 9.

And the food which is spoiled, tasteless, putrid, stale, refuse and also unclean, is dear to the 'Slothful'. 10.

(Ch. XVII.)

Penance

Three kinds of penance.

The triple penance (of the body, speech and mind) practised with supreme faith, by men of self-control, with no desire for fruit, is called 'Pure'. 17.

The penance which is performed for gaining respect, honour and worship and for the sake of mere show and which is unstable and uncertain, is called 'Passionate'. 18.

The penance which is performed with a deluded understanding by means of self-torture, or with the object of destroying others, is said to be 'Slothful'. 19.

(Ch. XVII.)

CHARITY

Three kinds of charity.

The charity that is made with a pure sense of duty, with no expectation of any return, and with due regard to the place, time, and person, is said to be 'Pure'. 20.

But the charity which is made in a grudging mood, with the expectation of some recompense or gain is considered to be 'Passionate'. 21.

The charity that is made disrespectfully, to undeserving persons, at an improper place and time is declared to be 'Slothful'. 22.

(Ch. XVII.)

RENUNCIATION

Three kinds of renunciation.

It is not proper to renounce the action that ought to be done. Its renunciation through delusion is declared to be 'Slothful'. 7.

He who renounces his action, simply because it is painful, through the fear of physical suffering, can never get the fruit of renunciation as it happens to be 'Passionate'. 8.

But he who performs a prescribed action, purely from a sense of duty, by renouncing all attachment and fruit—his renunciation O Arjuna! is regarded as 'Pure'. 9.

(Ch. XVIII.)

(4) Predominance of the Gunas

Even wise men are required to behave in conformity with Nature only.

Even a wise man acts in conformity with his nature. All beings follow their nature. What can restraint do? 33.
(Ch. III.)

There is no object in these three worlds which is not caught up in the three Guṇas.

There is no creature here on earth, nor among the gods in heaven, which is free from the three qualities born of Nature. 40.
(Ch. XVIII.)

(5) Transcendence of the Triple Gunas

This transcendence can be attained only through unswerving Yoga of Devotion.

When the embodied soul transcends the three Guṇas that spring from the body, it is freed from birth, death, old-age and sorrow, and attains life immortal. 20.

He who regards pain and pleasure alike, who dwells in his own Self, looks upon a clod, stone, and a piece of gold as of equal worth, who, being self-possessed, regards both pleasant and unpleasant things, as well as blame and praise alike— 24.

He who treats honour and dishonour, friends and foes alike, who renounces all enterprises—such a man is said to have transcended the three Guṇas. 25.

And he, who worships Me, with the Yoga of unswerving devotion, rises above the Guṇas and becomes fit for attaining the Absolute. 26.
(Ch. XIV.)

CHAPTER V

Destruction of the Arch-Enemy

(1) The Amnion of Desire

The enemy of desire envelops knowledge and impels even the wise to commit sin.

Arjuna said :

What impels a man O Kṛṣṇa! to commit sin in spite of himself, as though driven by force? 36.

Sri Bhagavān said :

It is desire. It is wrath, which springs from passion. Know this monster of greed and sin to be our enemy. 37.

As a flame is enveloped by smoke, mirror, by dust and embrio, by amnion, so is knowledge enveloped by it (desire). 38.

Thus is the knowledge enveloped by the eternal enemy of the wise, O Son of Kuṅti! the insatiable fire in the form of desire. 39.

(Ch. III.)

(2) Seats of Desire

"Let the mind wander but not the body."

The senses, the mind and intellect are said to be its

seats; through them does it envelop the knowledge and delude the soul. 40.

Therefore, O Arjuna! first control the senses and kill this wicked desire which destroys knowledge and realisation. 41.

(Ch. III.)

(3) Hypocrisy

Mentally brooding over the objects of sense, by controlling the senses, is also a sin.

He who controls his organs of sense, but continues to ponder in his mind over the objects of sense,—that deluded fellow is said to be a hypocrite. 6.

(Ch. III.)

(4) Sorites of Passions

The chain of evils arising from the unrestrained musing on the objects of sense.

When a man muses on the objects of sense, he develops an attachment for them.. Attachment produces desire and desire breeds anger. 62.

From anger arises infatuation; from infatuation, loss of memory; from loss of memory, ruin of reason; and from ruin of reason he meets with utter destruction. 63.

(Ch. II.)

(5) The Supreme Transcendence of the Atman

This enemy of desire cannot be destroyed except through Self-knowledge.

The senses are said to be superior to the body; but the mind is superior to the senses; the intellect is superior to the mind: but what is superior to the intellect is He (Atman). 42.

Hence, O Arjuna! realise that which is higher than the intellect and control the lower self by the higher Self and kill this enemy in the form of Desire, that is very difficult to conquer. 43.

(Ch. III.)

(6) Disappearance of Relish

Even though the sense objects turn away, the relish for them remains; it cannot be destroyed without the vision of God.

The objects of sense turn away from a man who does not enjoy them with his senses, but the relish for them remains behind. Even this relish disappears when he sees the Supreme. 59.

(Ch. II.)

(7) The Joy of Clear Vision

Self-control lends a clear vision which in its turn grants peace and peace brings bliss.

But a man of disciplined mind who moves among the objects of sense with his senses fully under his control and free from likes and dislikes, attains a clear vision. 64.

This clarity of vision puts an end to all sorrow, as it enables a man possessing it, to become firmly established in God. 65.

A man who cannot have any self-control, cannot have a keen intellect; neither can he possess proper devotion. A man without devotion can have no peace. How can he be happy when he has no peace? 66.

(Ch. II.)

(8) The Supreme Goal

A man who is freed from desire (lust), anger and avarice, achieves his spiritual welfare and attains the Highest Ideal.

Lust, anger and greed—these are the triple gateways to hell, leading to the ruin of the soul. Therefore, these three should be abandoned. 21.

The man who is freed from these three doors of darkness, O Arjuna! works out his own spiritual welfare and reaches the highest state. 22.

(Ch. XVI.)

CHAPTER VI

Bunch of Virtues

(1) Individual Virtues

Self-conquest

One's Self alone is one's brother. One's Self alone is one's enemy.

A man should raise himself by his own Self and should not degrade himself. For the Self alone is his friend and the Self alone is his enemy. 5.

The Self becomes the friend of a man who conquers his (lower) self by the (higher) Self. But the Self will be hostile to him as an enemy, who has not conquered his (lower) self by the (higher) Self. 6.

(Ch. VI.)

Single-mindedness

The reason of the resolute is one-pointed, while that of the irresolute branches out in many ways.

In this Yoga, O Arjuna! the resolute reason is one-pointed while the thoughts of the irresolute are diverse and endless. 41.

(Ch. II).

Endurance

Cold and heat, pleasure and pain are fleeting. Therefore, they should be endured.

O Son of Kuṅti! contacts between the senses and their objects which give rise to cold and heat, pleasure and pain, are fleeting. They are not lasting for ever. Hence, O Bhārata, learn to endure them. 14.

He who is not affected by these, who treats pleasure and pain alike—such a strong-minded person becomes fit for eternal life. 15.

(Ch. II.)

Non-lamentation

Why should we grieve for the beings whose beginning and end are unmanifest and who are manifest only for a brief period.

O Bhārata! the beings have an unmanifest origin and an unmanifest end; they are manifest only in the intermediate stage; why should you grieve for them? 28.

(Ch. II.)

Equality of Vision

Equality of vision itself is the attainment of Brahman.

The wise have the same vision in all—whether it be a learned and humble Brahmin or an outcaste, or a cow or an elephant or even a dog. 18.

Even here is the creation conquered (the liberation attained) by those whose mind has attained the state of equanimity. The Absolute is flawless and equanimous. Therefore are they established in the Absolute. 19.

(Ch. V.)

(2) Social Virtues

The Triple Penance

Penance of the body, speech and mind.

The worship of gods, twice-born, teachers and the wise, purity, uprightness, continence, and non-violence —these are called 'Penance of the Body.' 14.

Speech that is inoffensive, truthful, pleasant and beneficial, and practice of the study of the scriptures—these are said to be the 'Penance of Speech.' 15.

Cheerfulness of mind, gentleness, silence, self-control, and purity of heart—these are called the 'Penance of Mind'. 16.

(Ch. XVII.)

Devotion to Duty

The duties enjoined upon the four Varṇas according to their Guṇas.

The duties of Brāmanas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas as well as Śūdras have been apportioned, O Arjuna! according to their natural qualities. 41.

Control of the mind, control of the senses, austerity, purity, forgiveness, uprightness, as well as wisdom, insight and faith—these are the natural duties of a Brahmin. 42.

Heroism, majesty, firmness, resourcefulness, bravery in battle, generosity and rulership—these are the natural duties of a Kṣatriya. 43.

Agriculture, cow-protection, and trade are the natural duties of a Vaiśya. And service is the natural duty of a Śūdra. 44.

A man devoted to his own duty attains perfection.

Now just listen how such a man devoted to his own duty attains perfection! 45.

(Ch. XVIII.)

We must perform our own duty even at the cost of our life.

Better is one's own duty though devoid of merit, than the duty of another well-performed. Better is death in the performance of one's own duty; the duty of another is fraught with danger. 35.

(Ch. III.)

Divine Heritage

The characteristic of the Divine Heritage.

Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in the Path of Self-realisation; charity, self-control and sacrifice; study of the scriptures, penance and uprightness; 1.

Non-violence, truth, freedom from anger, renunciation, tranquillity, aversion to slander; compassion to living being, freedom from covetousness; gentleness, modesty and steadiness; 2.

Vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of malice, and excessive pride—these O Bhārata! are the endowments of those who belong to the Divine Heritage. 3.

(Ch. XVI.)

Demoniac Heritage

The characteristics of the Demoniac Heritage.

Hypocrisy, arrogance, and self-conceit; wrath, harshness and ignorance—these belong O Pārtha! to him who is born of Demoniac Heritage. 4.

(Ch. XVI.)

Detailed description of the persons belonging to Demoniac Heritage.

The demoniacs do not know the right way of action and the right way of renunciation. Neither do they possess purity, nor good conduct, nor truth. 7.

They say: "The world is unreal, without a basis and without God. It is brought about by mutual union and caused by lust. What else is there?" 8.

Holding this view, these lost souls of poor understanding, commit cruel deeds and become the enemies of the world, born as it were for its destruction. 9.

They possess insatiable passion and are full of hypocrisy, conceit and arrogance. They hold false doctrines through delusion and adopt impure vows. 10.

Troubled by endless cares, that would terminate only with their death, they are solely engaged in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures, by considering them to be the be-all and end-all of life. 11.

Enchained by hundreds of ties of desires, and engrossed wholely in passion and anger, they strive hard to amass heaps of wealth for the enjoyment of sensual pleasures. 12.

"This I have gained today; I shall realise this ambition; this wealth is mine and that also shall be mine again." 13.

"I have killed this enemy; I shall slay others as well. I am the Lord, I am the enjoyer. I am perfect, powerful and happy." 14.

"I am rich and of high birth; who else can bear comparison with me? I shall perform sacrifices, give alms and rejoice." Thus are they deluded by ignorance. 15.

Bewildered by numerous thoughts, entangled in the meshes of delusion and addicted to the enjoyment of sense-pleasures, they fall into foul hell. 16.

Possessed of egoism, power, passion, pride, and wealth, these malicious persons hate Me that dwell in the bodies of others as well as in their own. 18.

I hurl these cruel haters, the vilest among men in this world, constantly into the impure womb of the demons only. 19.

Fallen into the wombs of demons from birth to birth, these deluded fellows, O Arjuna! will never attain Me, but will go down to the lowest state. 20.

(Ch. XVI.)

Liberation and Bondage

Divine heritage leads to Liberation and Demoniac heritage to Bondage.

Divine heritage is said to bring about liberation while Demoniac heritage is said to lead to bondage. Grieve not, O Pāṇḍava! for you are born to Divine heritage. 5.

(Ch. XVI.)

Virtue is Knowledge

Concourse of virtue itself is Knowledge.

Humility, sincerity, non-violence, forgiveness, uprightness, service of the preceptor, purity, steadfastness, self-control; 7.

Dispassion towards the objects of sense, and self-effacement, constant awareness of pain and evil inherent in birth, death, old-age and disease; 8.

Detachment and non-identification with son, wife,

home, etc., and constant equanimity in the midst of agreeable and disagreeable circumstances; 9.

Unchanging devotion to Me, through profound meditation, resort to solitude and aversion for the crowd of people; 10.

Steadiness in Self-knowledge, vision of the object of true knowledge,—this is declared to be (real) knowledge, and all that is different from this is ignorance. 11.

(Ch. XIII.)

Culmination of Virtues in Devotion

Fix the gems of virtues in the socket of Devotion.

He who does not have anything, and is friendly and kind, who is free from egoism and self-sense, who treats pleasure and pain alike and is forgiving by nature; 13.

He who is ever contented and ever practises meditation, who is self-controlled and firm in his resolve, who has surrendered his mind and intellect to Me—that devotee of Mine is dear to Me. 14.

He who does not annoy the world, neither is he annoyed by it; who is free from joy, anger, fear and anxiety—that devotee is dear to Me. 15.

He who wants nothing, who is pure and clever, unconcerned and unperturbed, who renounces all selfish undertakings—that devotee is dear to Me. 16.

He who neither rejoices nor hates, neither grieves nor desires and who renounces both good and evil and is full of devotion for Me—that devotee is dear to Me. 17.

He who treats alike friend and foe, honour and infamy, heat and cold, pleasure and pain, and who is free from attachment; 18.

He who is alike in praise and blame, who is given to contemplation, and is satisfied with whatever he has, who has no fixed abode but has a firm mind—such a devotee is dear to Me. 19.

(Ch. XII.)

(3) CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EQUANIMOUS MAN

STEADY INTELLECT

He alone is an Equanimous Man who is engrossed in the bliss of the Atman, by abandoning passion, fear and wrath.

Arjuna said:

What is the mark of a man of steadfast mind, who is merged in meditation? O Kṛṣṇa! How does such a man speak? How does he sit and walk? 54.

Sri Bhagavān said:

O Pārtha! when a man abandons all the desires of the mind and is satisfied within himself through (the bliss of) his Self, then he is called an Equanimous Man. 55.

He whose mind is not disturbed by sorrow and is free from the thirst for pleasure and who has given up passion, fear and anger, is called stable-minded sage. 56.

He who is not attached to anything, who neither rejoices nor hates when he meets with good or evil—his mind is steady. 57.

(Ch. II.)

THE STATE OF A TORTOISE

He alone is an Equanimous Man who withdraws his senses and mind like a tortoise and steadily stays in Me.

When he withdraws his senses from the sense-objects from all sides, as a tortoise withdraws its limbs —his mind may be regarded to have become steady. 58.

Even though a wise man tries his best to control himself, his turbulent senses carry his mind away by force, O Arujna! 60.

Hence a seeker should control them all and remain absorbed in Me. For he who controls his senses will have a steady mind. 61.

(Ch. II.)

CONTROL OF A BOAT

He alone is an Equanimous Man who stabilises his mind-boat floating headlong along with the rushing current of the senses.

When the mind follows the wandering senses, it takes away his discrimination as a gale carries away a barge upon the waters. 67.

Therefore, O Arjuna! he whose senses are completely restrained from their objects, his mind is said to be steady. 68.

(Ch. II.)

THE POISE OF AN OCEAN

The mental ocean of the Wise does not overflow with the inflow of the streams of desire.

He, into whom all desires flow as rivers flow into the ocean, which, though ever filled, never overflows—such a man attains peace, not he who is full of desires. 70.

(Ch. II.)

CHAPTER VII

Yoga of Action

(1) Transcendence of Actions

Renunciation of fruits and attachment

We must perform all actions with an equanimous mind, by giving up the desire for fruit as well as the attachment.

Sri Bhagavān said:

You have only the right to work but never to the fruit of work. Hence let not the fruit of action be your motive, nor let there be any attachment to inaction. 47.

O Arjuna! Be fixed in Yoga and do your work, renouncing attachment and maintaining equanimity in success and failure. For this equanimity is called Yoga. 48.

(Ch. II.)

Equanimity in Success and Failure

He who remains satisfied with whatever he gets by chance and who treats success and failure alike is not affected by actions.

He who is contented with whatever he gets by chance, who transcends the dualities (of pleasure and

pain etc.) who is free from malice and is poised in success and failure—such a man is not bound even by his actions. 22.

(Ch. IV.)

Holy Actions

We must give up attachment and fruits even while performing holy actions.

Works of sacrifice, charity and penance are not to be given up; but they should be performed at all costs. For sacrifice, charity and penance purify the wise. 5.

Therefore, Arjuna, even these works should be performed by abandoning attachment and fruit. This is My considered and final opinion. 6.

(Ch. XVIII.)

Bodily Actions (permission as an only exception)

If we perform bodily actions alone without any expectation, we will not be affected by their sins.

He who is free from desires and has his body and mind under his control, and who gives up all objects of enjoyment, will not be affected by sin, if he performs simply bodily actions. 21.

(Ch. IV.)

We cannot completely abandon our actions, so long as we possess our body.

As it is impossible for any embodied being to give up action completely, he who renounces the fruit of his action is regarded a renouncer. 11.

(Ch. XVIII.)

Social Welfare

If we practise the Yoga of Action like king Janaka, we contribute to the social welfare as well.

King Janaka and others like him attained perfection through (disinterested) actions alone. You should perform actions for the welfare of the world as well. 20.

Whatever a great man does, the same is done by the ordinary men as well. They adopt the standard which he sets up. 21.

(Ch. III.)

Attainment of Actionlessness

Renunciation brings about the attainment of actionlessness.

He whose mind is not attached to anything, who has controlled his self and is free from desire—he attains the supreme state of actionlessness through this renunciation. 49.

(Ch. XVIII.)

(2) The Vedic Teaching Confined to Three Gunas only

The lovers of the Vedas attached to enjoyment and splendour, cannot keep their intellects steady in contemplation.

The unwise who are devoted to the letter of the Vedas, contend that there is nothing else (except the Vedas) by using their flowery words. 42.

As they are full of desire and consider heaven to be the supreme goal, they prescribe various special ceremonies for the attainment of pleasure and prosperity

and offer better rebirth as a fruit of these (holy) actions. 43.

Hence, those that are attached to enjoyment and prosperity and are captivated by these words (such teaching)—their resolute intellect cannot remain steady in contemplation. 44.

(Ch. II.)

As the Vedas are confined to the three Guṇas, he who is eager to attain the state of actionlessness, should give up the desire for acquisition and preservation, and fix his mind on the Atman.

Arjuna! the Vedas are confined to the three Guṇas. You should transcend these. Rise above the pairs of opposites; be steadfast in purity; do not care for the acquisition and preservation (of worldly objects) and be absorbed in the Self. 45.

(Ch. II.)

The Vedas are like a well while the Atman is like an ocean enveloping it.

A Brahmin who has realised the Atman, has the same use for all the Vedas, as one has for a well, when the whole place is flooded with water. 46.

(Ch. II.)

(3) Keep the Wheel of Sacrifice Moving

Sacrifice is free from the bonds of action.

Man is bound by the shackles of actions which are not done for and as sacrifice. Therefore, perform your works, O Arjuna, (as a sacrifice) without attachment. 9.

(Ch. III.)

Even though sacrifice is a Cow of Plenty, we must first offer back to God what He has granted to us, and accept only what is left over.

In ancient times, the Creator created men along with Sacrifice and said. "Do you multiply through this, and let this be a Cow of Plenty to you, yielding you the milk of your desire." 10.

"With this shall you support the gods and the gods shall support you. Thus supporting one another, you will attain the highest good." 11.

"Fostered by sacrifice, the gods will bestow on you the enjoyments you desire. And he who enjoys their gifts, without offering them in return, is verily a thief." 12.

The meritorious people, who partake of what remains after sacrifice, are freed from all sins. While the wicked who prepare food for their own sake, eat only sin. 13.

(Ch. III.)

To taste the nectar of the remains of a sacrifice means attainment of the Absolute.

Those who partake of the nectar of the remains of a sacrifice attain the eternal Absolute. But he who does not perform sacrifice will not get even the happiness of this world, O Arjuna! not to speak of the happiness of the other world. 31.

(Ch. IV.)

Sinful is the person who will not push forward this Wheel moving from times immemorial.

O Pārtha! the person who does not turn the wheel

thus set in motion, but takes delight in a sensual, sinful life—he lives in vain. 16.

(Ch. III.)

As all the five items of sacrifice partake of the nature of the Absolute, sacrifice is free from the bonds of action.

All the actions of man done for the sake of sacrifice melt away, when he is free from attachment, when he is liberated and has his mind established in the knowledge of the Absolute. 23.

For him who realises the Absolute in his works (of sacrifice), the offering is the Absolute, the oblation is the Absolute; it is the Absolute that offers it in the fire of the Absolute; the goal to be attained by him is also the Absolute. 24.

(Ch. IV.)

(4) Attainment of God

We can even attain God if we perform our actions without attachment.

Therefore, always perform your duty without attachment, for a man who performs his actions without attachment, attains the Supreme. 19.

(Ch. III.)

By depositing all your actions in Me, you can even carry on your fight with an attitude of detachment.

With your mind fixed in the Self, surrender all your actions to Me. And being free from desire and egoism, fight on without any mental torment. 30.

(Ch. III.)

With the flowers of our actions, we should worship the Lord from whom all the beings proceed and multiply.

Man attains perfection by worshipping with his actions, Him from whom all beings arise and by whom all this is pervaded. 46.

(Chap. XVIII.)

"Work with the hands and meditate upon the Lord, Hari."

A man doing desireless action knowing the truth, should think! "I do nothing at all" while seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting, walking and sleeping. 8.

While speaking, emitting, grasping, opening and closing his eyes, he should all the while consider that it is the senses that are occupied with their objects. 9.

He who works without attachment by offering all actions to God, is not affected by sin, as the lotus-leaf by water. 10.

(Ch. V.)

What duty remains for one who enjoys the bliss of the Atman?

But he who sports with the Atman, who is satisfied with the Atman, and who is delighted with the Atman alone,—he has no duty at all. 17.

(Ch. III.)

CHAPTER VIII

Yoga of Knowledge

(1) Annihilation of Action

What is the highest knowledge?

Sri Bhagavān said:

I shall fully explain to you both knowledge of the Self and of the Cosmos by learning which nothing more shall remain to be known here. 2.

(Ch. VII.)

Sacrifice in the form of knowledge is superior to all other sacrifices, for all actions culminate in knowledge.

Sacrifice in the form of knowledge is superior to material sacrifice, O Arjuna! For all actions without exception culminate in knowledge. 33.

(Ch. IV.)

The fire of knowledge burns all fuel of actions.

Just as the fire that is kindled reduces all fuel to ashes, O Arjuna! so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes. 37.

(Ch. IV.)

He alone deserves the epithet of a sage, who has burnt all his actions with the fire of knowledge.

He whose undertakings are all bereft of desire and self-will, and whose actions are burnt up by the fire of knowledge—him doth the wise call a sage. 19.
(Ch. IV.)

Since doubt is the cause of ruin, he who attains Self-knowledge beyond doubt, is alone free from the bonds of action.

An ignorant man devoid of faith and of a doubting nature, goes to ruin. For the doubting soul there is neither this world nor the world beyond, nor any happiness. 40.

He who performs self-less actions in the Yogic spirit, who has destroyed his doubts by Self-knowledge, and who has realised his Self, is not affected by the shackles of actions. 41.
(Ch. IV.)

(2) Self-knowledge, Very Difficult to Attain

The river of Yoga disappears and appears again after a lapse of time.

Thus handed down in regular succession, the royal sages know it (Yoga). But that Yoga, after a long lapse of time, disappeared O Arjuna! 2.

As you are a devotee and a friend of Mine, I have taught this ancient Yoga—this supreme secret to you. 3.
(Ch. IV.)

Rare is the man who has realised God.

Scarcely one in a thousand strives to achieve perfection; and of these who strive and succeed, scarcely one knows Me in reality. 3.
(Ch. VII.)

Time is required for achieving perfection in Yoga as well as for the complete assimilation of that all-purifying Self-knowledge.

Nothing on earth equals Self-knowledge in purity. A perfect Yogi attains it in himself after a lapse of time.
38.
(Ch. IV.)

(3) Initiation in Knowledge

You can know the Path of Knowledge from the realised Seers, through humble service.

Learn that knowledge (from the seers) by humble reverence, by repeated enquiry and service. The wise Seers will impart that to you.
34.
(Ch. IV.)

(4) The Beginning of Knowledge

[*Even the beginning (of this Yoga) will put an end to great fear.*]

When once we begin to tread the Path of Knowledge, it will enable us to reach perfection—our goal—without any obstacles.

In this path, our effort will not be in vain, neither will it be beset with impediments. Even a little achievement in it, will save us from great fear.
40.
(Ch. II.)

(5) Attainment of the Supreme Person

Through one-pointed devotion it is possible to attain the All-pervading Almighty God.

This Unmanifest, spoken of as the Imperishable, is

called the Supreme Goal. That is My Supreme Abode, by attaining which there is no return. 21.

Pārtha! that Supreme Person, in whom all beings reside, and by whom all this is pervaded, can be attained only by one-pointed devotion. 22.

(Ch. VIII.)

He alone merges in God, who realises that God is the source and abode of all beings.

When a person perceives that the existence of different beings is centered in the One and that the expanse has issued from there—then he attains the Absolute. 30.

(Ch. XIII.)

That knowledge will remove the darkness of your delusion and will enable you to perceive all the beings in the Atman.

When you know this O Arjuna! you will not be deluded like this again; for you will then perceive all the beings without an exception in the Atman (Self) as well as in Me. 35.

(Ch. IV.)

The night of the common people is the day for the wise.

What is night for all the beings is the time when the Yogi is awake; and the time when all the beings are awake, is night for the seeing sage. 69.

(Ch. II.)

(6) Vision of Equality

He who attains equality in the vision of God, can alone be entitled to the epithet of a realised Seer.

Verily he alone is a Seer who sees the Lord abiding alike in all beings, never perishing when they perish. 27.

For, as he sees the same Lord present alike everywhere, he does no harm to his Self and reaches the Supreme State. 28.

(Ch. XIII.)

(7) Attainment of Supermoralism

Even if you are the foremost of all the sinners, you will cross over all the sins by the raft of divine knowledge.

Even though you are the most sinful of all the sinners, you will cross over all the sins by the boat of knowledge alone. 36.

(Ch. IV.)

Unlimited is the merit in the form of this knowledge.

The Yogi who knows this, transcends all the rewards, prescribed for the study of the Vedas, for sacrifices, for penance and for charities and attains the Supreme, Primeval State. 28.

(Ch. VIII.)

CHAPTER IX

Yoga of Meditation

(1) Synthesis of the Four Paths

Meditation, Knowledge, Action and Devotion—these are the Four Paths leading to God.

Sri Bhagavān said:

Some perceive the Self in their hearts, by Meditation; others by the Path of Knowledge and still others by the Path of Action. 24.

But others who do not know this, hear about it from others and worship. And they too transcend death by their Devotion to what they have heard. 25.

(Ch. XIII.)

(2) Steadiness of Posture

The Yogi who sits in a steady posture in solitude and worships Me with a fixed mind, attains the supreme peace and bliss of Mine.

A Yogi should remain in solitude, control his mind and body, be free from desires and possessions, and try to concentrate his mind always on the Supreme Self. 10.

He should set his firm seat in a pure place, neither too high nor too low, and spread over it the sacred grass, a dear skin and a cloth, one over the other. 11.

He should sit there, restrain his mind and senses, concentrate his mind and practise Yoga for Self-purification. 12.

He should hold his body, head and neck erect and still, and gaze steadily on the tip of his nose, without looking in any other directions. 13.

Serene and fearless, steadfast in the vow of celibacy and subdued in mind, he should sit thinking of Me and absorbed in Me. 14.

Thus keeping himself ever steadfast, the Yogi of the subdued mind, attains the lasting peace, leading to supreme bliss which abides in Me. 15.

(Ch. VI.)

(3) Restraints and Regulations
Practice and Dispassion

Restraint of the supremely fickle mind is impossible without practice and dispassion.

Arjuna said:

Kṛṣṇa! owing to the fickleness of my mind, I do not see any stability for the Yoga of Equanimity taught by You. 33.

For the mind is very fickle, O Kṛṣṇa! it is violent, powerful and obstinate. It is, therefore, I think, as difficult to control as the wind. 34.

Sri Bhagavān said:

Yes, Arjuna! the mind is really very fickle and difficult to control. It can, however, be controlled by constant practice and dispassion. 35.

I think Yoga is hard to achieve by one whose mind is not subdued. But it can be attained by one who has

controlled his mind, and who strives through proper practice. 36.

(Ch. VI.)

The Fire of Self-control

Some offer the objects as oblations in the fire of senses and others offer senses as oblations in the fire of self-control.

Some offer as oblations their sense of hearing etc., in the fire of self-restraint; while others offer sound and other objects of sense in the fire of senses. 26.

Others again offer all the functions of their senses and of the vital airs as sacrifice, in the fire of self-control kindled by knowledge. 27.

(Ch. IV.)

Temperate Food, Sleep and Recreation

He alone who is temperate in his food, sleep and recreation, can accomplish Yoga.

Yoga is not for him who eats too much, nor for him who eats too little. It is not for him who sleeps too much, nor for him who keeps awake too much. 16.

He who is moderate in his food and recreation, who is restrained in all his actions, and who has regulated his sleep and wakefulness, has his sorrows destroyed by Yoga. 17.

(Ch. VI.)

Equality of Happiness and Sorrow

The Yogi who regards cold and heat, pleasure and pain, friend and foe alike, finds God to be quite in his vicinity.

God is very near the man who has developed self-control and is quite serene, in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, honour and infamy. 7.

That Yogi is called a realised soul, who is satisfied with knowledge and experience, and who, having conquered his senses, is ever steady and who treats a clod, a stone, and a piece of gold alike. 8

He stands supreme, who bears an equal regard for well-wishers, friends and foes, for those who are indifferent, impartial, inimical and brotherly, as well as for those who are virtuous and sinful. 9.

(Ch. VI.)

Disgust

Let your mind feel disgusted for what is heard (or seen) and what is to be heard (or seen), and remain steady in Samādhi.

When your mind transgresses the confusion due to delusion, you will then be disgusted with what is heard and what is yet to be heard. 52.

When your mind which is confused by the Vedic texts, will remain steadfast and firm in Samādhi—then will you attain union with God. 53.

(Ch. II.)

(4) Equality of Inhalation and Exhalation

A steady gaze at the middle of the eye-brows, equality of Prāṇa and Apāna, Restraints and Regulations, and Passionate Devotion for the Lord—these are the means of Liberation.

Shutting out all external objects, fixing the gaze between the eye-brows, and equalising the inward and outward breaths flowing within the nostrils; 27.

The sage who has brought his senses, mind and reason under control, who is free from desire, fear and anger, and who is intent on liberation—he is verily ever liberated. 28.

(Ch. V.)

(5) Withdrawal, Concentration and Meditation

Through utter disgust (for the world) we should gradually turn our mind away from desires and make it steady in the Atman.

Know that state to be Yoga which is free from the contact of pain. And resolutely practise that Yoga with mind full of disgust. 23.

Completely renouncing all the desires arising from imagination (thought of the world) and restraining with his mind all the senses from all sides; 24.

Let him gradually attain tranquillity with the help of steadfast reason, and concentrating his mind on the Atman, let him not think of anything else. 25.

Let him restrain the fickle and wavering mind from all objects after which it runs, and concentrate it on the Atman. 26.

(Ch. VI.)

(6) The Lamp of Samadhi

He may be called a Yogi, whose mind remains steady in the Atman like a lamp undisturbed by the wind.

When a man is free from all desires and has his disciplined mind concentrated on the Atman alone—he is then called a Yogi. 18.

A Yogi with a subdued mind, practising meditation

on the Atman, is likened to a lamp steadily burning in a windless place. 19.

(Ch. VI.)

(7) Vision of the Atman

Realisation of the Atman.

That (is the state of realisation) in which the mind, controlled by the practice of concentration, is at rest, and in which he has a vision of the Atman through intuition and enjoys the bliss of the Atman. 20.

(Ch. VI.)

(8) Bliss is Brahman

The Supreme Bliss which a Yogi attains through the vision of the Atman, can not be dislodged from him even by stupendous sorrow.

The supreme Bliss is beyond the reach of senses, and can only be realised through intuition. And a Yogi established in it will never swerve from Truth. 21.

On gaining which he feels there is no greater gain, and established in which he is not moved even by great sorrow. 22

(Ch. VI.)

The Supreme Bliss enjoyed by a Yogi means Self-realisation.

The Yogi whose mind is at rest, whose passions are composed and who is pure and has become one with God, attains supreme bliss. 27.

The sinless Yogi, becoming one with Atman, easily enjoys the ecstatic bliss—which is Brahman. 28.

(Ch. VI.)

(9) Attainment of the Bliss *6 Brahman everywhere

Brahman hovers round about one who has experienced the bliss of the Atman within.

The Yogi who is happy within, who rejoices within, and who is illumined within, becomes divine and attains the bliss of Brahman. 24.

The Seers whose sins are destroyed, whose doubts are dispelled, whose minds are disciplined, and who are engaged in promoting the welfare of all beings, attain the bliss of Brahman. 25.

The bliss of Brahman lies around those sages, who are free from lust and anger, who have subdued their mind, and have realised the Atman. 26.

(Ch. V.)

(10) Vision of God Everywhere

Such a Yogi experiences the Vision of Equality in both the ways.

A Yogi who has become one with the Atman, sees his Atman in all beings, and all beings in his Atman. He attains such an equality of vision everywhere. 29.

He who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me—I am never lost to him, neither is he ever lost to Me. 30.

The Yogi who attained oneness, and who worships Me abiding in all beings—he dwells in Me, even though he is engaged in all sorts of activities. 31.

Arjuna! he who looks equally upon all as himself, in pleasure or in pain—he is regarded as a perfect Yogi. 32.

(Ch. VI.)

(11) Combination of Yoga and Devotion

A Yogi is superior to a man of knowledge as well as a man of action; and a Yogi full of devotion is superior to all other Yogis.

A Yogi is superior to an ascetic; he is deemed superior to a man of knowledge as well as a man of action. Hence O Arjuna! do you become a Yogi. 46.

And of all the Yogis, he who devoutly worships Me with his heart dwelling in Me is regarded by Me to be the best of them all. 47.

(Ch. VI.)

CHAPTER X

Yoga of Devotion

(1) NATURE OF WORSHIP

The worship of the Unmanifested is very troublesome.

Arjuna said:

The devotees who worship You, with their mind ever fixed in Yoga in this manner, and those who worship the Imperishable Unmanifest Brahman—which of these are the best knowers of Yoga? 1.

Sri Bhagavān said:

Them do I consider to be the best Yogis, who are endowed with supreme faith, who are ever united with Me through meditation, and worship Me with their minds centered on Me. 2.

But those who worship the Imperishable, the Ineffable, the Unmanifested, the Omnipresent, the Incomprehensible, the Immutable, the Unchanging and the Eternal; 3.

By restraining all their senses, being even-minded in all conditions, engaged in the welfare of all beings—they also attain Me. 4.

The difficulties of those whose minds are attached to the Unmanifested, is greater, for the goal of the Unmanifested—Brahman is hard to reach by the embodied beings. 5.

(Ch. XII.)

Those who work for Me and meditate on Me with single-minded devotion will soon be taken by Me across the ocean of worldly existence.

But those who are solely devoted to Me, surrender all their actions to Me and meditate on Me, and worship Me with single-minded devotion, 6.

Soon shall I save them from the ocean of mortal life, O Pārtha! as their minds are ever set on Me. 7.

(Ch. XII.)

(2) Crossing the Cosmic Illusion

Absolute surrender to Me alone is the means of crossing My Māyā (Illusion) consisting of the three Guṇas.

Deluded by the three-fold modes of Nature (Guṇas) this whole world does not know Me who am above them and eternal. 13.

It is very difficult to cross My divine illusion consisting of the three Guṇas (modes). But those who surrender to Me alone can cross this. 14.

(Ch. VII.)

Several persons have become one with Me till now, by giving up passion, fear, and anger, by purifying themselves through penance of knowledge and by taking refuge in Me.

Freed from passion, fear and anger, absorbed in Me, seeking refuge in Me, and purified by the penance of knowledge, many have become one with Me 10.
(Ch. IV.)

The wicked cannot surrender to Me.

The foolish, wicked wretches who are deprived of their knowledge by illusion and who partake of the nature of demons, do not seek refuge in Me. 15.
(Ch. VII.)

Only in those whose sin has vanished is born devotion for Me.

Those pious people whose sin has vanished, who are free from the delusion of dualities, and who are firm in their vows, worship Me. 28.
(Ch. VII.)

Even a vile man endowed with intense devotion and right resolve, can become a Sage.

Even if the most sinful man worships Me with exclusive devotion, he must be regarded as a sage, for he has made a right resolve. 30.

He would soon become righteous and attain eternal peace. Know it for certain, Arjuna, that My devotee never perishes. 31.
(Ch. IX.)

My devotees belonging to any race, caste and class, are equally dear to Me.

Even the lowly born, women, Vaiśyās and Śūdras, who take refuge in Me, attain the highest Goal. 32.

What wonder is there, that the holy Brahmanās and

the devout Royal Sages should attain it! (Therefore, having come in this fleeting and unhappy world, do you worship Me). 33.

(Ch. IX.)

Persons desperately calling on Me for liberation from old-age and death, can alone realise Me.

Those who take refuge in Me and strive for deliverance from old-age and death—they shall know the Absolute, all about the Self and all about actions as well. 29.

(Ch. VII.)

(3) Joy from the Glorification of God

Those persons are the great souls, who know Me to be the source of all beings and constantly glorify Me with an undistracted mind.

But the great souls, O Pārtha, who partake of the divine nature, knowing Me to be the imperishable source of all beings, worship Me with an undistracted mind. 13.

Ever glorifying Me and striving to attain Me with steadfast vows, they bow before Me and worship Me with constant devotion. 14.

(Ch. IX.)

He who always meditates on Me with an undivided mind, can attain Me quite easily.

Arjuna, he who always meditates on Me with a concentrated mind—by such a Yogi ever absorbed in Me, I am easily attainable. 14.

(Ch. VIII.)

Knowing that I am the origin of all, they are filled with devotion and with their minds fixed on Me, they are absorbed in one anothers' bliss.

I am the origin of all; from Me proceed all things. The wise knowing this, worship Me with full devotion. 8.

With their minds fixed on Me, and their lives surrendered to Me, they enlighten one another by talking about Me. Thus do they rejoice and amuse themselves. 9.

(Ch. X.)

(4) Union of God and Devotee

To such a devout Yogi I show the path of intellect —I give a particular bent to his intellect and volition and with the object of showing compassion, enkindle the lamp of Atman before him.

To those who thus constantly meditate on Me and devoutly worship Me, I bestow proper understanding by which they come to Me. 10.

Out of compassion for them alone, I dwell in their hearts. I dispel the darkness born of ignorance, by the shining lamp of knowledge. 11.

(Ch. X.)

I bear the burden of acquisition and preservation of those who worship Me with constancy and single-mindedness.

I bear the responsibility of acquiring the new and preserving the old, of those who are ever devoted to Me, meditate on Me with an undivided mind and worship Me. 12.

(Ch. IX.)

(5) The Devotee is the Crest-jewel of the Wise

Of the four types of devotees, the realised devotee who worships Me with one-pointed devotion, is the best.

Four types of virtuous men worship Me, O Arjuna, —the man in distress, seeker of knowledge, end-seeker and the man of wisdom. 16.

Of these, the wise man, who is ever attuned to Me with single-minded devotion, is the best. For I am supremely dear to him and he is dear to Me. 17.

All these are equally noble, but I regard the man of wisdom to be My Self. Perfectly Self-united, he resorts to Me alone as the highest goal. 18.

(Ch. VII.)

The realised devotee visualises the whole world as God.

At the end of many births, this man of realisation seeks refuge in Me, realising that all this is God. Such a great soul is very rare. 19.

(Ch. VII.)

(6) Entrance into God

If you place your mind and intellect in Me, you will have residence in Me alone.

Fix your mind on Me; and place your intellect in Me alone. You will then abide in Me only. Of this there is no doubt at all. 8.

(Ch. XII.)

After the seeker realises My nature through intense morality, meditation and supreme devotion, he can get entrance into Me.

Endowed with clear vision, firmly restraining himself, renouncing sound and other objects of sense, and casting aside likes and dislikes; 51.

Dwelling in solitude, eating but little, restraining his speech, body and mind, ever engaged in meditation, and cultivating dispassion; 52.

And abandoning self-sense, violence, pride, desire, anger and possession; ego-less and tranquil—he becomes worthy of becoming one with Brahman. 53.

Having become one with Brahman and cheerful in mind, he neither grieves nor desires. He regards all beings alike and attains supreme devotion to Me. 54.

Through that devotion he comes to know Me, what I am and who I am. Then knowing Me in essence, he forthwith enters into Me. 55

(Ch. XVIII.)

CHAPTER XI

Cosmic Vision

(1) Longing for the Vision of the Form

Arjuna's longing to see the real form of God.

Arjuna said:

Yes, Lord, You are exactly what You declare Yourself to be. However, I long to see Your Form Divine, O Supreme Person! 3.

Lord! if You think that I can see it, then O Lord of Yoga! do You reveal that Imperishable Form to me. 4.

(Ch. XI.)

(2) Gift of Divine Vision

God's form cannot be seen without a divine vision.

Sri Bhagavān said:

Behold, O Pārtha! My forms by hundreds and thousands, manifold and divine, of various colours and shapes; 5.

But you cannot see Me with these physical eyes of yours; I will bestow on you the divine eye. Behold now My sovereign Yogic power. 8.

(Ch. XI.)

(3) Vision of the Divine Form

Supremely wonderful and Lustrous Universal Form of God.

Sañjaya said:

O King! having spoken like this, Hari, the great Master of Yoga, revealed to Arjuna, His Supreme Divine Form. 9.

It had several faces and eyes, many wonderful sights, many divine ornaments and several uplifted divine weapons. 10.

It was wearing celestial garlands and clothes, was anointed with divine sandal-paste, full of wonders, brilliant, infinite and wonderful. 11.

If the lustre of thousand suns were to flash forth all at once in the heavens, it might resemble the splendour of that exalted Lord. 12.

(Ch. XI.)

Terrible and Marvellous Sentiment

The description of the Cosmic Form made by Arjuna, full of terrible and marvellous sentiment.

Arjuna said:

Lord! I behold in your body all the gods and all the hosts of different beings, Lord Brahma on his lotus throne, and Ṛshīs and heavenly Nāgās. 15.

O Lord of the Universe! I see you endowed with numerous arms, trunks, faces and eyes, and having infinite forms on all sides, O Form Universal! I see neither your beginning, nor middle nor end. 16.

For by You alone are filled this space between heaven and earth and all the quarters of the sky,

O Mighty Lord! beholding this marvellous and terrible form of Yours, all the three worlds are greatly alarmed. 20.

Lord! when I see You, reaching the skies, brilliant with varied colours, with Your mouth wide open, with large eyes—shining bright, my inner Self is frightened and I lose courage and peace. 24.

When I see Your mouths with terrible fangs, like Time's devouring flames, I am bewildered and find no peace; Hence, be gracious O Lord of gods and Abode of the universe! 25.

All these sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra together with the hosts of kings, and also Bhīṣma, Drōṇa and Karṇa here, and the leading warriors on our sides as well— 26.

They are rushing into Your fearful mouths set with terrible fangs. Some are caught between the teeth, with their heads pounded down. 27.

As moths rush rapidly into the blazing fire to perish there, even so, all these people rush into Your mouths with great speed, to their own destruction. 29.

Devouring all the people with Your flaming mouths on every side, You are licking them up. Lord! Your terrible lustre is burning the entire universe, filling it up with its radiance. 30.

Tell me who You are, with form so terrible. I bow to You O God Supreme! have mercy on me. I wish to know You, the Primeval Being, in essence, for I don't realise Your purpose. 31.

(Ch. XI.)

(5) Slain Already

God is all-powerful; He has slain the heroes of the enemy already.

Sri Bhagavān said:

I am the powerful Time, the destroyer of the people. I have begun to slay these men here. All these warriors arrayed in hostile camps, will not survive even without you. 32.

Therefore arise and win glory; conquer your enemies and enjoy a prosperous kingdom. These have been already slain by Me. Be you only an instrument, O Arjuna! 33.

Do you kill Drōṇa, and Bhīṣma and Jayadhṛta and Karṇa and other brave warriors, that are already killed by Me. Be not afraid. Fight! You will surely conquer the enemies in battle. 34.

(Ch. XI.)

(6) Mingling of Joy and Fear

Mingling of joy and fear in the heart of Arjuna.

Arjuna said:

I am delighted to see what was never seen by me before; but my mind is also shaken with fear. Pray reveal to me that other form of Yours. O Lord of gods! Abode of the World! be gracious to me. 45.

(Ch. XI.)

(7) Entrance into the Universal Form

It is only through single-minded devotion that devotees like Arjuna can enter into the Universal Form of the Lord.

Sri Bhagavān said:

Arjuna! being pleased with you, I have shown you, through My own power of Yoga, this Supreme, Resplendent, Primeval, Infinite, Universal Form which none but you has seen before. 47.

Arjuna! in this world of mortals, I cannot be seen in such a Form by anyone else except you, either through the study of the Vedas or by rituals or by gifts, sacrifices or austere penances. 48.

Neither by the study of the Vedas, nor by penance, nor by charity, nor yet by sacrifice, can I be seen in the Form in which you have seen Me now. 53.

But by single-minded devotion to Me alone, I can be truly known, seen, and entered into, O Valiant Arjuna! 54.

(Ch. XI.)

CHAPTER XII

Lord's Assurance

(1) Crossing the Ocean of Calamities

If you firmly fix your mind in Me you will, through My grace, be saved from all calamities.

Sri Bhagavān said:

Mentally surrendering all your actions to Me, be absorbed in Me. Resorting to Yoga of equanimity, fix your mind constantly on Me. 57.

With your mind thus fixed on Me, through My grace, you will surmount all calamities. But if you don't listen to Me, through pride, you will be utterly ruined. 58.

(Ch. XVIII)

(2) Compulsion of Nature

Nature will overpower you and compel you to perform action, in spite of your wish to the contrary.

Prompted by egoism, if you say, "I will not fight," vain is your resolve; Nature will compel you to fight. 59.

Kauṅteya! bound by your duty born of your nature,

you will perform, in spite of you, that which, through delusion, you do not want to do. 60.

(Ch. XVIII.)

(3) Whirling of God's Wheel of Illusion

Submit with all your being to the Lord, who resides in all beings and whirls them all with His mysterious power.

Arjuna! the Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, whirling them by His mysterious power, as if they were mounted on a machine. 61.

Seek refuge in Him only, with all your heart, O Bhārata! Through His grace you will attain supreme peace and an eternal abode. 62.

(Ch. XVIII.)

(4) Self-surrender

If you surrender all your duties and seek refuge in Me, with all your being, I shall free you from all sins.

Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, and bow to Me. You will certainly come to Me only. This I truly promise you for you are dear to Me. 65.

Surrendering all duties to Me, seek refuge in Me alone. I shall free you from all sins. 66.

(Ch. XVIII.)

(5) Devotion in the Form of Imparting the Supreme Secret

If you impart this Supreme Secret to My devotees, you will be the dearest of all, both in the past as well as in the present.

He who imparts this Supreme Secret to My devotees, would show the highest devotion to Me and would undoubtedly attain Me. 68.

There is no one among men other than him who does a thing which I like most. Nor will there be anyone on earth, dearer to Me than he. 69.

(Ch. XVIII.)

(6) Submission of Arjuna

Arjuna's promise to act up to the advice of Śri Kṛṣṇa.

Have you heard this Pārtha! with one-pointed attention? Has your delusion born of ignorance been dispelled? 72.

Arjuna said:

Achyuta! through Your grace, my delusion is gone. I have come to myself. I stand freed from doubts. I shall carry out your word. 73.

(Ch. XVIII.)

(7) A Thrilling Dialogue

Who will not be filled with wonder and joy, by hearing this thrilling dialogue and seeing this supremely marvellous Form of God?

Sañjaya said:

Thus have I heard this wonderful and thrilling dialogue between Kṛṣṇa and the high-souled Arjuna. 74.

O King! as often as I remember this wonderful and sacred dialogue between Sri Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again. 76.

And as often as I visualise that supremely marvellous form of Kṛṣṇa, great is my wonder, O King! and I rejoice again and again. 77.

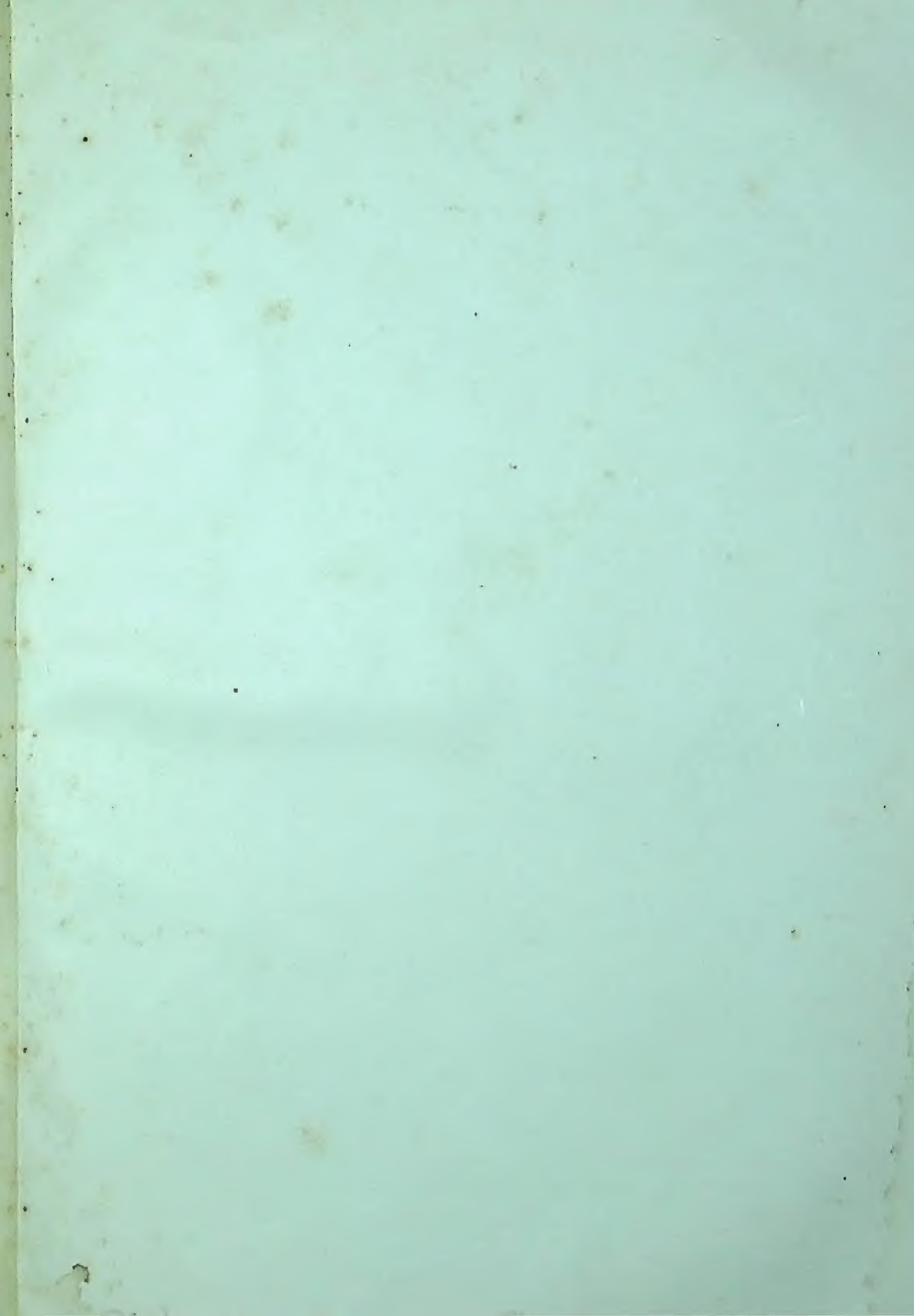
(Ch. XVIII.)

(8) Attainment of Victory and Prosperity

Victory and prosperity will surely be there where Kṛṣṇa—the Lord of Yoga and Arjuna—the great archer are present.

Where there is Śri Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yoga, and Arjuna—that great archer, there will surely be fortune, victory, prosperity and permanent righteousness. Such is my conviction. 78.

(Ch. XVIII.)



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SRI MANOHAR SRINIWAS DESHPANDE, M.A. was born in 1899 in a remote village of Athani Taluka in the Karnatak State. Since his childhood, he lived and moved in the Marathi atmosphere. During the period of his higher education in Poona, he was greatly influenced by the burning patriotism of Lokamanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi. Hence, soon after his graduation in 1922, he joined a band of young idealists and started a High School at Athani to inculcate the spirit of nationalism among the students. He worked in that Institution as a life-member for well-nigh 35 years and retired as its Principal.

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